

THE SCHOOL CONTEXT: DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

Developmental Psychopathology in the Schools

- School related definitions for conditions
- Handicap → Disability
- “[The] definition of disability in relation to special education is inextricably connected to educational impact. All of the definitions of disability, in one form or another, speak to the effect of the disability on the student’s educational progress.”
MA DOE Is Special Education the Right Service, p. 10

Disability categories

- Autism (*includes Asperger’s Syndrome*)
- Developmental Delay
- Intellectual Impairment
- Sensory Impairment (Hearing &/or Vision)
- Neurological Impairment
- Emotional Impairment
- Communication Impairment
- Physical Impairment
- Health Impairment (*includes ADHD*)
- Specific Learning Disability

-- 603 CMR 28.02

Orthogonal to IQ?

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History: Students with Disabilities

- Early 1800’s Galluadet in US
- 1860 Braille introduced to US
- 1930’s Individuals with physical disabilities excluded from WPA assistance
 - Roosevelt almost no photographs in chair
- 1939 Hitler: disabled to euthanasia program

- 1963 Kirk: Learning Disabilities

Civil Rights

- 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson
 - Upholds constitutionality of racial segregation (railroads)
 - Separate but equal accepted principle
- 1954 Brown v. Board of Education Topeka
 - Repudiates Plessy
 - “Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal”
- 1964 Civil Rights Act
 - Racial segregation outlawed in schools, public places, & employment
 - Equal Protection clause

Children with disabilities: Not yet
School districts could still exclude or refuse to enroll “uneducable”

Mentally retarded
Behaviorally disruptive
Mentally ill
Multiply handicapped

1970's times change

- 1973 Rehabilitation Act
 - Following 2 pocket vetoes by Nixon
 - Vocational & Architectural Barriers
 - Accommodations for Access
 - Regulations not promulgated for years
 - 1976—Sit in at HEW offices prompts regs
- 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act

*Continues to govern access in K-12
When Special Education services not required
But access is enough—e.g., preferential seating*

PL 94-142 Education of All Handicapped Children Law, 1975

- Schools mandated to provide *all children* Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Multidisciplinary Educational Team
 - Parents
- Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
 - Mainstreaming (presumptive placement)
- Due Process guarantees

- Implementation follows

Updated: IDEA

1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

- Child First
- Team must include General Educator
- Goals include Transition
- LRE model = Inclusion
 - Change Presumptive Placement

2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Post-1997

Inclusion means:

Every Classroom = Special Classroom

Every Educator = Special Educator

No Child Left Behind:

Every statewide exam = Every student

IEP

- Individualized
- Behavioral goals and objectives
- Instructional strategies & responsibilities
- Assessment no less often than in regular classroom
- All services and accommodations—including testing—identified here based on child's individual needs
- Developed as team!

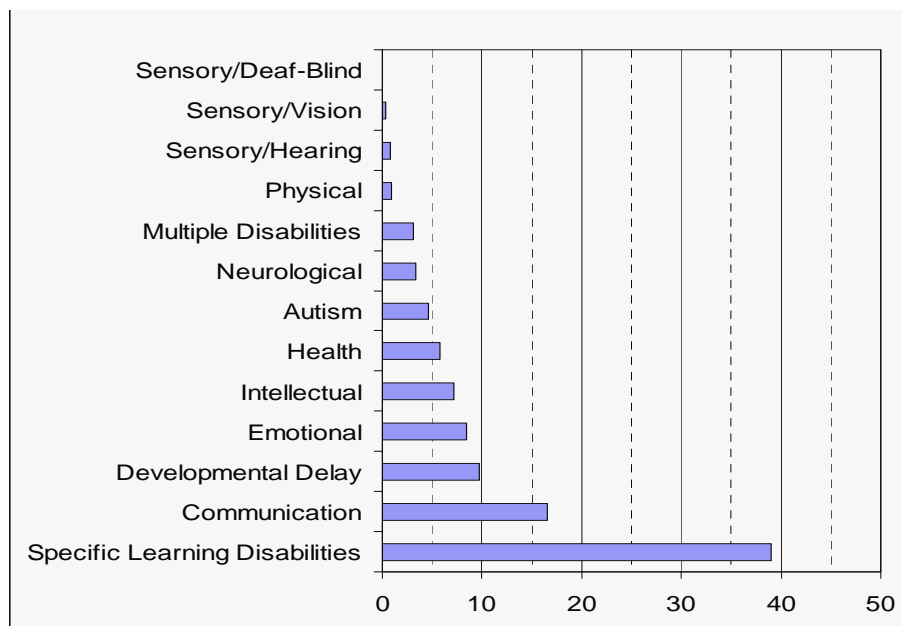
LRE

- Place closest to regular classroom where student can make adequate yearly progress
- Balance between regular class and individual needs
 - LRE for some children = regular classroom
 - LRE for other children = separate class
 - LRE for other children = separate school

MA public schools

- 2002-2008 Numbers special education increase while overall numbers decline
- 16.89% students enrolled SPED 2007-08
- 37% SPED students are also Low Income

MA 06-07 SPED by category



MA students by placement

Type Inclusion	Time Spent in Regular Class	Time in 5 hr. day	% SPED students	
			3-5 yo	6-21 yo
Full	≥ 80%	4 hr	66	56
Partial	40-79%	2-4 hrs	20	22
Separate Class	< 40%	< 2 hrs	12	15
			98%	92%

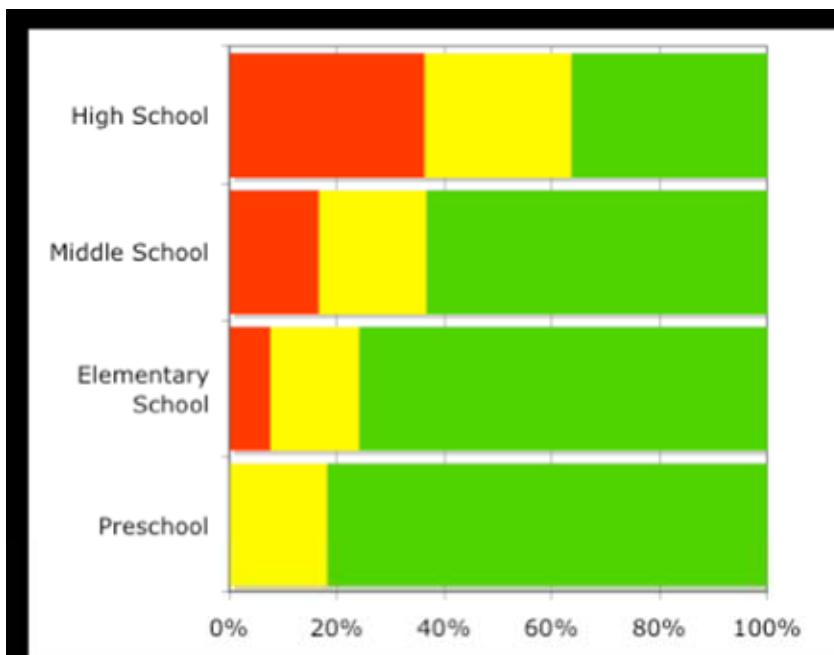
Who's training the teachers?

- Divergence in teacher preparation
 - Regular education certificate
 - Special education certificate
- Exacerbated among HS educators
 - Focus on content and not pedagogy
 - Students have more teachers
 - Teachers have more students

General Educators on the Team?

- Purpose of IEP is individualized
 - IEP = contract with the district
- Educators *contribute*
- Must be present at IEP meetings
 - Team meetings = communication vehicle
 - Not just carry out someone else's ideas
 - Buy in from the outset
 - Valuable contributions
- HS: How to include with greater numbers?

Evidence of Problem



General education teachers make accommodations and modifications as indicated on my child's IEP (BSEAC survey, 2008)

Transition??

- Planning to begin no later than age 14
- Spectrum of post-secondary possibilities
- Post secondary school
 - **Change** in laws covering disabilities
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (**ADA** 1990)
 - **Access** to curriculum
 - Students must **self identify** to Office

- Accommodations, not services

Students with Disabilities in College
(development continues!)

- Yes, and growing
 - 6-8% across 1990's (Nat'l FR survey)
 - 40% LD
- Likely to increase
 - IDEA 97 mandates post-secondary transition planning no later than age 14
 - K-12 IDEA 97 cohort → 18 in 2010

Accurate estimates?

- Prevalence likely underestimated
- 2006 Study: 115 undergraduates at UML
- Do you consider self to have disability?
- Does it interfere with school?
- Identified with the Office for Disability?

43% Any disability

23% disability interferes with school

7% Identified with the Office for Disabilities on Campus

Why didn't they self-identify to the Office for Disabilities?

- Didn't know
- It would do no good
- Faculty not supportive
- Prior bad experience
- Embarrassed

Implications of these data?

- Problems not limited to HS
- Post-secondary challenges are great
 - Faculty training, for example
- Require advanced preparation of students so they are able to navigate the changing landscape when they move on to college

Back to pre-K through 12
IDEA 2004
Due Process

- Compliance oversight
 - Program Quality Assurance
 - 6 yr full & 3 yr mid-cycle review: Civil rights
- Schools provide
 - BSEA Board of Special Education Appeals
 - Automatic forwarding of rejected IEPs
- Mediation, Arbitration
- Court

Manifestation Determination

- When failure to provide adequate services results in behavioral problem
- Hearing convened to determine whether behavior problem is manifestation of disability in context of current treatment
 - Student cannot be removed from school
 - Student cannot be punished for schools failure to provide FAPE

Parent Advisory Council

- Every school district must provide parents of children with disabilities with a specialized parent organization
- Promote exchange of information & support
- In addition to general PTO

Parent Information Center

- Every state must have a centralized unit
- Federation for Children with Special Needs
 - Massachusetts PIC
 - www.fcsn.org
 - Free information, support, training
 - Educational advocates
- Free help for families in negotiating the Special Education maze

Parents

Normative expectations

Study of 73 couples First time parents, 3rd trimester

*** **Prepared** ***

Fearful

Complacent

Mixed

Delmore-Ko et al (2000) J. Fam. Psychology

Developmental Psychopathologies:

The unexpected turn

- Example: Learning Disabilities

- When?
 - Learning disabilities “hidden”
- How?
 - Identification by parent or professional
- When does help arrive?
 - Lag between initial diagnosis and services

NLST2

- 2nd National Longitudinal Transition Study
- US Dept. of Education
- Longitudinal → multi-year study
- 12,000 students ages 13 to 16
- Their parents, schools, and teachers

NLST: 1987 NLST2: 2001

Age at First Diagnosis

Average age: 5.7 years but...

25% ages 7-8 and 20% grade 4 (age 9) or later

Age at first services

First two years	10%
Preschool (3-4 yrs)	10%
School entry (5-6)	20%
Primary grades (7-8)	30%
Grade 4 or later (9+)	30%

Children with LD

- 55% diagnosed by 5-6 yrs
- 24% SPED in schools by 5-6 yrs
- 24% SPED services in schools \geq 11 yrs

Plan B

Welcome to Holland

Welcome To Holland By Emily Perl Kingsley

I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability - to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this.....

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip - to Italy. You buy a bunch of guide books and make your wonderful plans. The Coliseum. The Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later, the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland." "Holland?!?" you say. "What do you mean Holland?? I signed up for Italy! I'm supposed to be in Italy. All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place, full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place. So you must go out and buy new guide books. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met. It's just a different place. It's slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around.... and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills....and Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandts. But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy... and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And for the rest of your life, you will say "Yes, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned."

And the pain of that will never, ever, ever, ever go away... because the loss of that dream is a very very significant loss.

But... if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things ... about Holland.

LD as loss

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross (1969)

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance

Lifetime issues

- Not a one-time event
- Grief work counselors **TEAR**
- To accept the reality of the loss
- Experience the pain of the loss
- Adjust to new life without lost object
- Reinvest in the new reality

H. Gorte. See www.consciouschoice.org (2000)

Marathon, not a sprint

- Challenges change as with non-LD
- Stakes get higher
- Re-experience losses
- Cycle through repeatedly
- Hitting the wall
- Renew, refresh, re-hydrate

Why so hard?

- What sources of support and information are available to parents of children with learning disabilities?
- How appropriate is that which source can provide?

Own Experience

- Parents age 35 in 2005
- Born in 1970; school 1975-87
- Education All Handicapped Children Act 1975
 - Mainstreaming→exclusion is default
- Individuals with Disabilities Educ. Act 1997
 - Inclusion
- Own experience with LD or SPED not applicable

Ask Mom (aka, Grandma)

- Birth of “Learning Disabilities” field marked by first conference ACLD 1963
 - ACLD→LDAM→LDW
- SPED even more exclusionary pre-1970
- Reflects misconceptions
- Old ideas about intelligence and ability
- Parent vulnerable to suggestions during uncertainty

Ask the Pediatrician?

- Survey of Pediatricians 1998 AAP
- Asked to rate residency training
- VERY GOOD
 - Immunizations, Newborn care: >80%
 - Developmental/behavioral: 35%
- **POOR**
 - Learning Disabilities: 37%

Teachers

- Highly Qualified (NCLB)
- Content Area
 - Middle & High School

School Specialists

- Child: one part at a time
- Child actually: Whole > sum of parts
- Parents see whole child—energy level, social skills, integration across courses
 - Exhaustion
 - Frustration

Wait a minute!

- When did I become an expert?
- Dynamics of learning teams
- Advocacy v. Partnership

Any other life?

- Other children: Equity not equality
- Employment: Bidirectional effects
- Spouse or Partner
- Friends (who have gone to Italy)
- Friends (also touring Holland)

Pooling resources

- Funding for schools & “high cost kids”
- Fighting for a limited pie
- PAC's and other informal networks
- Information, support, and affirmation

Look for the sun

- Encourage and participate in positives
- Say at least one positive thing before criticizing
- Payoff in emotional tenor of home
- Reduced stress levels for self and family