



NHASP Statement Supporting Social Justice and Anti-Racism

The New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists believes that the school psychology community in New Hampshire should be at the forefront of promoting peace and social justice. A commitment to social justice is a core value underlying the work of school psychologists. The death of George Floyd and the outpouring of support and frustration have moved NHASP to examine the role that school psychologists in New Hampshire have unfortunately played in perpetuating systemic racism. School psychologists are trained to promote safe and supportive schools for *all* students through equitable and evidence-based practices. In support of the National Association of School Psychologists' (NASP) [Call for Action to End Racism and Violence Against People of Color](#), the New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists is committed to ongoing and intentional action for social justice to address the impacts of racism and violence against Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC).

In 2017, the NASP Board of Directors stressed the importance of social justice, noting:

“Social justice is both a process and a goal that requires action. School psychologists work to ensure the protection of the educational rights, opportunities, and well-being of all children, especially those whose voices have been muted, identities obscured, or needs ignored. Social justice requires promoting non-discriminatory practices and the empowerment of families and communities. School psychologists enact social justice through culturally-responsive professional practice and advocacy to create schools, communities, and systems that ensure equity and fairness for all children and youth.” (Adopted by the NASP Board of Directors, April 2017).

School psychologists define social justice as, “...action to address systemic barriers, such as long-term issues of poverty, inequity, prejudice, racism, and violence.” To actively address social justice in their work with students, educators, and families, NASP and NHASP encourage school psychologists to take these actions:

- Think critically about structures, systems, and policies that marginalize some groups and caused long-term inequities.
- Recognize and understand the truth about racism and White privilege, and examine our own perspectives and implicit and explicit biases that contribute to perpetuating these systemic problems.
- Speak up when we observe harmful speech and action and name racism when we see it.
- Establish the knowledge and systems to recognize and address acute stress and trauma in students and staff who experience or are vulnerable to racism.
- Advocate for and engage in frank discussions about racism and privilege and provide students and staff tools to combat injustice.
- Support and encourage school boards and school administrators to improve existing anti-discrimination policies and procedures, and monitor for the consistent application of those policies and procedures.
- Model civil discourse and engage children and youth in conversations that focus on common goals rather than labeling groups of people because of individual behavior.
- Examine the mechanisms of power and punishment, and work to ensure positive, equitable discipline policies and practices in every school.



Practice Guidance

- Establish and reinforce trusting relationships among students, staff, families, community providers, and law enforcement.
- Ensure that when law enforcement is present in schools, officers are carefully selected and trained, are not involved in routine discipline, and are evaluated regularly for behaving in ways consistent with training provided by the National Association of School Resource Officers.
- Recognize that each of us will never fully understand the life experiences of others, especially those with other racial identities or cultural experiences. Instead, focus on actively listening and learning with humility about the experiences of others.

NHASP is committed to the ongoing work of supporting school psychologists across the state and will take the following steps to enhance social justice in New Hampshire. NHASP will:

- Provide ongoing training around anti-racist educational practices, implicit and explicit bias, and examine how these biases impact staff and student interactions.
- Advocate for public policies that address the destructive, systemic inequities of poverty and racism.
- Foster collaboration between school- and community-based professionals to implement evidence-based practices in the routine discipline of students, including students with disabilities, consistent with trainings provided by the National Association of School Resource Officers.
- Work collaboratively with training programs to recruit BIPOC to school psychology graduate programs to build a more diverse school psychology workforce that is more representative of student populations.
- Recruit diverse voices for leadership positions within NHASP.
- Share resources for school psychologists on social justice.
- Facilitate ongoing dialogue within the NHASP executive board as well as the school psychology community in NH with the goal of updating policies and practices with regard to Social Justice.

The activities identified above are the beginning of a call for action by NHASP to better meet the needs of all children and families across the state. NHASP recognizes that schools play a vital role for children as they learn and develop expectations for social norms. It is always our responsibility to show children and youth that adults are individuals who can both help keep them safe and who can work to fix the problems that may threaten children's well-being. It is not enough to be angry. We can and must do better through our words and our actions. We have a collective responsibility to benefit our communities' children. NHASP's call for action is a first step in an ongoing effort for school psychologists to realize the goal of social justice, to end racism, and to provide safe, effective learning environments for all of our children. For additional resources related to social justice and anti-racist practices, please visit the NASP website (<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/diversity/social-justice>.)