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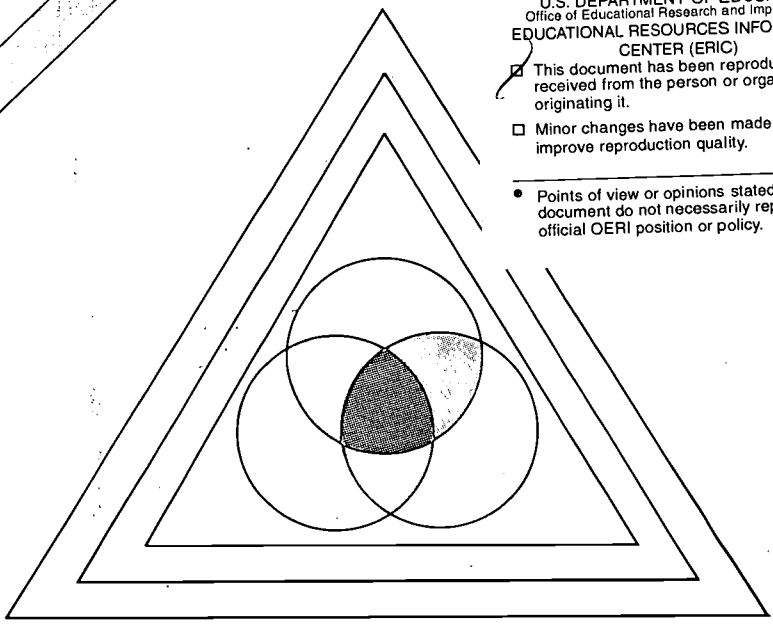
ABSTRACT

This report contains an overview of the General Psychoeducational Program Network and four research papers on the education of students with Serious Emotional Disturbances (SED). The first paper, "Academic Progress of SED students Served in the Georgia Psychoeducational Program Network" (Thomas H. Cope), reports on a study which found significant academic progress by 137 students with SED who participated in the Georgia Psychoeducational Program network. The second paper, "Provisionally Terminated SED Students in Georgia--Where Are They?" (William W. Swan and Robert T. Jacob), found that a relatively high number of the 382 students terminated from the program were placed in regular education. The third paper, "Longitudinal Follow-Up of Students Three to Five Years after Termination from Programs in the Georgia Psychoeducational Program Network" (N. Wayne Moffett and Georgia Moore), found that, of 56 students who had been terminated from SED services for 3 to 5 years, none had been placed in custody or placed in institutions. The final paper, "Update on Research in Progress" (Phillip H. Pickens and Patricia O. Higgins), briefly summarizes progress on additional research projects. (Each paper contains references.) (CR)

RESEARCH STUDIES IN THE GEORGIA PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL PROGRAM NETWORK



Research Report # 85-101

This first Research Report of the Georgia Psychoeducational Program Network is lovingly dedicated to Jim Hall. Jim served as the chair of the Program Effectiveness Task Force for two years and had served as the director of the Southwest Georgia Psychoeducational Services in Thomasville until his death on August 24, 1985.

Jim Hall was our friend, our colleague, and a good man. He represented the optimism we all desire, the professionalism we strive for, the dedication we all admire, and the good we look for in our fellow man.

Jim was a positive influence in our professional Network of Psychoeducational Program directors and educators. He is sorely missed and his positive attitude and approach for solving problems, for taking on new challenges and for dealing with issues revisited will remain in our hearts and minds.

There is a challenge for each of us--to accept the tasks and work for future studies, articles and journals with the "Okey Dokey" spirit of Jim Hall.

The dedication of this Research Report to Jim is an expression of our gratitude for his enthusiasm and his leadership in this effort and all the other tasks he so willingly performed for all children and especially for our special children.

Research Report # 85-101
Research Studies
in
The Georgia Psychoeducational Program Network

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Introduction and Overview

Joan A. Jordan
Georgia Department of Education

History and Background

Many questions have been asked during the past fifteen years regarding the availability and effectiveness of services for students in public schools. As early as 1970 in Georgia, concerns and questions about services for severely emotionally disturbed and severely behaviorally disordered (SED/SBD) students were expressed and ultimately resulted in the development of a prototype for services to SED/SBD students ages birth through fourteen years. Parents, board of education members, educators, concerned citizens and others developed the concept for a network of programs to provide comprehensive, community based services to SED/SBD students and their families. A model for such services was developed by Dr. Mary M. Wood and was federally and state funded for two years. In 1972, the Georgia General Assembly funded the first four of the twenty-four Programs that were included in the Georgia Psychoeducaitonal Program Network. The last Programs were funded in fiscal year 1975. The Network is unique in Georgia and nationally. This is the only statewide system of community based comprehensive services for SED/SBD students who are defined as children whose primary disability is a severe emotional disturbance or a severe behavior disorder; one or more of the following may be regarded as eligibility for placement in a Psychoeducational Program:

-severe emotional disturbance such as childhood schizophrenia, severe emotional deprivation and adjustment reactions;
-severe behavioral disorders such as neurological impairment, autism, cultural deprivation and developmental lag;
-severe school related problems manifested in behavior, socialization, communication and academic skills.
(Georgia Department of Education, 1982)

This Network is comprised of 24 multi-district Programs which serve SED/SBD students in the 187 local education agencies in Georgia. In 1980, the Georgia legislature funded the adolescent psychoeducational programs which serve 15 through 18 year old students. Approximately one-half of one percent of the total student population is the estimate used to project the number of students to be served. This estimate has been accepted; during the past thirteen years, the needs of students and the services provided by the Network demonstrate the accuracy of this estimate.

Since 1972, the Psychoeducational Programs have systematically collected comprehensive data regarding all students served including individual demographic descriptors, services provided, cummulative hours of services to parents and other agency personnel, and student progress. The Network provides services to approximately 10,000 students

and their families annually and has a rich historical base as well as a broad data base for answering a variety of questions for a variety of target audiences.

Data availability, the increasing questions of the 1980's, and the interest of the State Psychoeducational Network Coordinator and the Psychoeducational Network directors resulted in the appointment of the Program Effectiveness Task Force in 1983. After conducting preliminary discussions and completing a survey to determine the current research efforts, pilot studies, concerns, interests, and data use, research topics were specified and several studies were initiated. The Task Force, which was appointed by the then Coordinator of the Network, Joan A. Jordan, included Wayne Moffett, Georgia Moore, Elizabeth LeClair, Bob Jacob, Bill Swan, Tom Cope, Patty Higgins and Jim Hall who chaired the Task Force until his death in August, 1985.

Recognizing the need for continued efforts in utilizing available data and conducting additional studies, an application for a federal research grant for a Psychoeducational Network Research Consortium Project was developed and submitted late in 1983. Although the application was not funded for fiscal year 1985, the Task Force, other Psychoeducational directors, Bill Swan and the Psychoeducational staff in the Georgia Department of Education made a commitment to develop several research ideas and to request the voluntary participation of the Psychoeducational Programs. Information was shared with the other directors and after several meetings of the Task Force, three specific studies were suggested and determined appropriate. These research studies were discussed with the directors and the Psychoeducational Programs were requested to participate in at least one of the three studies on a voluntary basis. Nine of the Programs participated in the academic progress study, sixteen in the provisional termination study, and thirteen in the longitudinal study. These three studies are contained in this Research Report.

There is a wealth of existing student data, services data, Program summaries, and Network summaries available for review and study. Additionally, there are comprehensive cost/financial data available for the past several years--some of which have been summarized by the state staff. Direct and indirect service data are summarized by each Program and reported monthly. Annual summaries of these data are prepared for the Network. This summaries include numbers of students in classes, in tracking services, and in indirect services; the number of psychological, developmental, educational, and psychiatric evaluations; the number of students provisionally terminated (improved), circumstantially terminated (moved), and finally terminated (after provisional termination with at least 12 months of tracking). These summaries are also provided by school system and location of services--either in the main Program or its satellite programs. Academic, psychological, and social/emotional assessments and histories are completed and maintained on all students served in the Programs. Additionally, demographic descriptors including age, sex, race, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, III (DSM III) (American Psychiatric Association, 1980) diagnoses and family status are recorded and maintained for all students served in classes. For example, Table 1 contains some of the demographic descriptors of those students served in classes during the 1984-1985 school year.

While students are served in the Psychoeducational Program classes, there are periodic assessments which reflect student growth and/or needs as well as intervention strategies. Pre- and post educational assessments are required annually. Each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is reviewed at least annually. However, in the Psychoeducational Programs, there is an ongoing documentation of each student's performance and status on objectives. These may include, but are not limited to, academic, behavioral, communication, and socialization activities. Contact and involvement with the student's family, school and other agency personnel are a major part of the comprehensive services offered through the Psychoeducational Program. Summaries of these contacts including frequency and nature of the contact are reported at least quarterly; annual reports are developed for the Network.

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTORS
(AGE GROUP AND FAMILY STATUS BY SEX AND RACE)

OF

SED STUDENTS SERVED IN CLASSES IN FY 1985
(N=4318)

	MALE				FEMALE				GRAND
	BLACK	WHITE	OTHER	TOTAL	BLACK	WHITE	OTHER	TOTAL	TOTAL
AGE GROUP[a]									
B-2,11	19	23	-	42	11	16	-	27	69
3	44	46	-	90	18	21	1	40	130
4	68	59	2	129	23	37	1	61	190
5	55	55	-	110	18	31	-	49	159
6-8,11	215	304	2	521	62	89	-	151	672
9-11,11	353	431	3	787	73	96	2	171	958
12-14,11	324	595	3	922	95	114	2	211	1133
15-18+	265	513	2	780	94	127	6	227	1007
TOTALS	1343	2026	12	3381	394	531	12	937	4318
FAMILY STATUS[b]									
SINGLE	709	632	2	1343	208	144	3	355	1698
BOTH	396	1169	6	1571	111	303	8	422	1993
FOSTER	71	73	-	144	34	25	1	60	204
OTHER	167	152	4	323	41	59	-	100	423
TOTALS	1343	2026	12	3381	394	531	12	937	4318

[a] AGE IN YEARS, MONTHS

[b] SINGLE=SINGLE PARENT FAMILY; BOTH=TWO PARENT FAMILY; FOSTER=IN FOSTER PLACEMENT; OTHER=OTHER SITUATIONS

Staff development activities for the Pyschoeducational staff, school personnel, and other agency personnel are part of the Program's objectives and records are kept regarding the topics, the hours and the audiences. This information is reported quarterly.

Follow-up data regarding services for students after termination and after graduation are collected and reported. Adolescents who have completed high school are followed up. Since 1980, surveys have been conducted and results reported informally. Of the approximate 400 adolescents reported, a sizable number are employed, enrolled in post-secondary technical programs, in college, or in military service. Others are reported in mental health day services, residential services; only four are reported incarcerated to date.

Challenges for the Future

This Research Report containing three studies and an update on current research is a first for the Psychoeducational Network. With this initial Research Report the state is set for continuing existing studies and initiating other research efforts. There is an enormous amount of data available in the Network which should be utilized. Individual Psychoeducational Program projects--both formal and informal--should be expanded where appropriate and new ones developed. Documentation which will lead to appropriate measures of program effectiveness and student progress must be continued.

This Research Report as well as other formal and informal efforts of the Network demonstrate the willingness of the directors and staff, the Georgia Department of Education, and the University of Georgia to evaluate the Programs and to utilize the data which are required and reported. These and future studies will provide an opportunity for quality review, goal development, and improved decision making. The Georgia Psychoeducational Network Research Consortium Project was rewritten and submitted for funding under a federal research application competition, has been approved for funding in 1985-1986, and is awaiting approval of final negotiations for funding. The Research Consortium provides a structure and national advisory council which will assist in providing vital data and studies of national significance in this critical area of special education. Studies such as the ones reported here and those of the future for the Psychoeducational Programs are unique in several ways: there are potentially large numbers of students who can be included in the data base; the organization and structure for systematic statewide data and longitudinal studies are inherent to the Network; and there is enthusiastic support and commitment for participating in these efforts.

The Psychoeducational Task Force members, Bill Swan, Carvin Brown and Peggy Wood, the Psychoeducational Program directors, and the Georgia Department of Education staff are commended for their dedication, commitment and untiring efforts on their own time. This first Research Report is truly a credit to them specifically and to all who participated in these studies. This Research Report represents a major undertaking and truly exemplifies the professionalism of all those involved and provides a base upon which to continue the dissemination of important findings.

The future is ours to behold and to direct. Much has been gained from these studies and future research efforts are encouraged. These and future studies will help define the questions more specifically and hopefully will provide some answers about providing the highest quality of services to SED/SBD students and their families.

References

Georgia Department of Education, Program for Exceptional Children (1982) Regulations and Procedures.

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Academic Progress of SED Students Served in the Georgia Psychoeducational Program Network

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Southwest Georgia Psychoeducational Services

The term "Psychoeducational Program" implies a dual concern for educational and psychological welfare. Most of the students referred to Psychoeducational Programs for emotional/affective difficulties are also experiencing academic difficulty. Recognizing the relationship between academic functioning and severe emotional disturbance (SED), the SED definition includes "Severe school related problems manifested in, but not limited to, behavior, socialization, communication, and academic skills (Georgia Department of Education, 1982).

The presumption of a relationship between academic and affective processes and functioning has been logically defended (Hewett and Taylor, 1980). Academic difficulty/failure is typically associated with such descriptors as low self concept, withdrawal, and acting out; school success is typically associated with strong self concept, interaction with others, and appropriate behavior.

The 24 Psychoeducational Programs are charged with the goals of assisting SED students toward normative independent functioning and educational placement in the least restrictive environment. Regardless of placement, academic functioning is a barometer of student success.

This pilot study focused on three purposes:

- to describe the instruments being used statewide to assess academic progress for three age groups (preschool: birth through 4 years, 11 months; school age: 5 years through 14 years, 11 months; and adolescent: 15 years through 18 years, 11 months);
- to provide comparisons of pre-test and post-test differences when sample sizes were sufficiently large (n >15) for an instrument;
- and to provide recommendations for continuing research in this area.

Method

Data Collection

Each Program was requested to provide pre- and post-test scores (including subtest scores) on all standardized instruments used to measure academic progress for five randomly selected students in each of the three age groups. An original request was sent to each Program, and a reminder was sent to those Programs which had not responded within a month to the initial request. Only student identification number, age group, and test score data were reported for this study.

Subjects

The subjects were SED students who had been served in a Program for a minimum of five months during 1984-1985 and for whom standardized academic test data were available on a pre- and post-test basis. Nine Programs provided data on 137 SED students in the three age groups: preschool (n=47), school age (n=45), and adolescent (n=45).

Analyses

Frequency counts were used for the descriptive analyses, and t-tests for matched pairs were used to test for significant differences between pre- and post-test data on instruments where the sample size was sufficiently large ($n > 15$). A significance level of .05 was used for the matched pairs t-tests.

Results

Description of Instruments Used

Each of the nine Programs provided data on from 14 to 18 SED students, and all provided data on students in all three age groups (see Table 1).

TABLE 1

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS REPORTED BY AGE GROUP AND PROGRAM (N=137)

	AGE GROUP			
PROGRAM NUMBER	PRESCHOOL	SCHOOLAGE	ADOLESCENT	TOTAL
#1	5	5	5	15
#2	5	5	5	15
#3	5	5	5	15
#4	5	5	5	15
#5	5	5	5	15
#6	5	5	4	14
#7	7	5	6	18
#8	5	5	5	15
#9	5	5	5	15
TOTALS	47	45	45	137

The Programs reported data on a total of 15 different assessment devices used with the three age groups: Basic Academic Skills Individual Screener (BASIS); Brigance Inventory of Early Development, Brigance Inventory of Basic Skills, and Brigance Inventory of Essential Skills (Brigance); Denver Developmental Screening Inventory (DDST); Developmental Profile (Alpern-Boll); Developmental Activity Screening Inventory (DASI); Key Math Diagnostic Arithmetic Test (Key Math); Lakeland Adaptive Behavior Scale (Lakeland); Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP); Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT); Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT); Portage Guide to Early Education (Portage); Preschool Attainment Record (PAR); Sewell Early Education Profile (Sewell); The Diagnostic Reading Scales (Spache); and the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT). Technical data (e.g., reliability, validity, and standardization data) for each of these instruments may be found in the technical manuals for each instrument.

The instruments were used by the Programs to varying degrees: PIAT--seven Programs; Brigance--five Programs; Alpern-Boll, Denver, Lakeland and WRAT--two Programs each; all other instruments were used by Program.

Table 2 summarizes the use of the instruments by age group. The Brigance was the only instrument used for all all groups. The Key Math, PIAT, Spache, and WRAT were used for both the school age and adolescent groups. The PPVT was used only with the school age group, and the remaining instruments were used only with the preschool group.

TABLE 2

INSTRUMENT USE BY AGE GROUP
(N=15 INSTRUMENTS)

	AGE GROUP		
	PRESCHOOL	SCHOOL AGE	ADOLESCENT
INSTRUMENT			
ALPERN-BOLL	X		
BASIS	X		
BRIGANCE	X	X	X
DDST	X		
DASI	X		
KEY MATH		X	X
LAKELAND	X		
LAP	X		
PIAT		X	X
PPVT		X	
PORTAGE	X		
PAR	X		
SEWELL	X		
SPACHE		X	X
WRAT		X	X

Descriptive

The sample sizes for thirteen of the instruments ranged from n=1 to n=10. While statistical analyses for these data were not appropriate, descriptive statements are valuable to portray some progress for these students. On the screening measures (e.g., DDST), the number of students with significant delays were identified and information for more indepth diagnostic assessments was provided. For the other assessment instruments (e.g., Alpern-Boll, Key Math, Spache), average gain scores ranged from approximately 2.1 months to approximately 18 months.

Matched Pairs T-Tests

The Programs used only two instruments--Brigance and PIAT--with sufficiently large samples ($n > 15$) to allow for statistical analysis. The samples were determined based on the total number of students assessed with the instruments across appropriate age groups.

For the PIAT, pre- and post-test data were reported on a total of 39 students in the school age and adolescent groups. Table 3 provides the statistics for the pre- and post-tests and the matched pairs t-test results. The $t_{38} = 5.66$ is significant beyond the .05 level indicating statistically significant growth for these students during the 1984-1985 school year when they were receiving services in Psychoeducational Programs.

TABLE 3

MATCHED PAIRS T-TEST FOR PIAT SCORES
(n=39)

PRE-TEST MEAN (S.D.)	POST-TEST MEAN (S.D.)	DF	t-RATIO*	PROBABILITY
5.66 (3.16)	6.30 (3.26)	38	5.66**	.000

*TWO-TAILED TEST **$p < .05$

For the Brigance, the five sets of pre- and post-subtest scores (Word Comprehension, Oral Reading, Word Recognition, Spelling, and Math) were analyzed with the matched pairs t-test. Table 4 summarizes the results of these analyses revealing singificant differences at the .05 level for Oral Reading, Word Recognition, Spelling, and Math. The Reading Comprehension subtest approached significance (p = .054). The mean gains ranged from six and one-half to eight and one-half months.

TABLE 4

MATCHED PAIRS t-TEST FOR BRIGANCE SUBTEST SCORES

SUBTEST	SAMPLE SIZE	PRE-TEST MEAN (S.D.)	POST-TEST MEAN (S.D.)	DF	t RATIO*	PROB.
WORD COMPREHENSION	17	3.42 (2.89)	4.18 (2.46)	16	2.05	.054
ORAL READING	22	4.44 (2.91)	5.17 (2.89)	21	4.61**	.000
WORD RECOGNITION	16	4.43 (2.29)	5.28 (2.34)	15	3.82**	.005
SPELLING	23	3.22 (2.11)	3.96 (2.21)	22	3.72**	.001
MATH	26	3.74 (1.59)	4.42 (1.59)	25	4.36**	.000

*TWO TAILED TEST **$p < .05$

Summary and Discussion

The results reveal that a number of instruments is used to assess academic progress throughout the Psychoeducational Programs. This may be due to factors including training of assessment personnel, curriculum, needs of students, school district commitments/adoptions, appropriateness of instrument for IEP goals, and availability of instruments.

The results also suggest that SED students served in the Psychoeducational Programs statewide and across age groups make significant academic progress during the year. The groups of students sampled show from six and one-half to eight and one-half month gains on the Brigance and PIAT; the descriptive data reveal gains from approximately two months to eighteen months depending on the instrument. While there were some individual cases of regression, none of the group averages was negative. These results are similar to those reported by Epstein and Cullinan (1983) concerning the WRAT, PIAT and the Gilmore; by Abidin and Seltzer (1981) regarding learning rates prior to and in treatment; by the Dallas Independent School District (1981) reporting increases in academics of over one year; and by Montgomery and Van Vleet (1978) concerning the PIAT with month for month gains for students while in the treatment programs.

This growth trend is important because these students are exceptional, and the assumption is that they are unable to progress academically because of their emotional disturbance. While this may be true for some SED students, it is clearly not true for all of them.

Recommendations

For more than two decades and ongoing today, professionals have recognized the importance of academic functioning and its relationship to emotional disturbance. Bower (1969) indicated academic failure as one of the five general characteristics of an emotionally handicapped student. The continued investigation of academic achievement with SED students deserves continued indepth investigation.

In regards to future research, it would be useful to establish some uniformity in assessment devices utilized for purposes of measuring academic gain. The uniformity could be attained by using formative and evaluations suitable for individual students and Program

purposes while using one measure throughout the Network for all students in a particular age group. This could be achieved through the use of standardized and criterion referenced tests mandated under Georgia's Quality Basic Education Act (1985). The result would be consistency in data reporting while allowing for the continued independence necessary for accommodation of each Network Program to the uniqueness of the students' districts it serves.

Further, this first study examining academic gains across Programs in the Network should be expanded in other ways:

-increased sample sizes in the age groups;
-regression-projection analyses to consider projected rates of growth based on a student's past academic history;
-consideration of services variables such as length of time in classes, severity of problem, diagnostic classification according to the DSM III (1980), prior retention in grade, and particular learning problems;
-shared responsibility for data collection and analysis among Network Programs;
-followup studies of academic achievement by students terminated from or completing Network Programs.

Research efforts in examining academic progress are important and should be continued to assist in maximizing the effectiveness of programming for SED students.

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Provisionally Terminated SED Students in Georgia
Where Are They?

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University of Georgia

Robert T. Jacob
Rutland Psychoeducational Program

One important purpose of special education for students who are severely emotionally disturbed (SED) is to provide transition to less restrictive settings as students show progress. Change in placement is one important indicator of program effectiveness. Few studies have been conducted to examine change in placement to less restrictive settings for SED students.

An SED student is provisionally terminated from a Network Program when that student has made sufficient progress in Program classes to be placed in a less restrictive environment. The provisional termination decision can only be made by the Individual Educational Plan/Placement Committee as a part of reviewing the student's progress on the Individual Educational Plan (IEP). If a new special education placement is determined, a revised IEP must be developed consistent with school district, state, and federal procedures (Georgia Department of Education, 1982). This process serves as one form of external review of student progress. A second form of evidence is a student's placement in an educational setting that is less restrictive.

This pilot study examines the issue of provisional temination of SED students as they leave a Network Program for a new educational placement. Specifically, the investigation had three purposes: (a) to provide demographic descriptions of provisionally terminated SED students, (b) to examine the relationship among demographic descriptor variables and placement at provisional termination, and (c) to provide recommendations for more complete research efforts in these areas.

Methods

Sixteen of the 24 Programs in the Network provided data for this study.

Data Collection

Each participating Program completed a one page form providing data on each provisionally terminated student including: identification number (to assure confidentiality, no student names were used); age group (preschool: birth-4 years, 11 months; school age: 5 years-14 years, 11 months; and adolescent: 15 years-18 years, 11 months); date of birth; sex; race; grade in school and placement on provisional termination (current placement); and if a special education placement, the area of exceptionality. The Network definitions for all variables were used and were consistent with Georgia definitions, regulations, and procedures (Georgia Department of Education, 1983, 1982).

An initial analysis of data from 11 of 16 Programs revealed a difficulty in coding instructions for the variety of placements on provisional termination. More articulate instructions were provided and

each of the 16 Programs verified its data under the revised instructions. The data were content valid through using established Network definitions and the revised instructions.

Subjects

The subjects were 382 SED students served in the Network who were provisionally terminated in 1984-1985. The subjects reported by sixteen of the 24 Network Programs comprised three groups: preschool (n=40), school age (n=281), and adolescent (n=61). Male students outnumbered female students by a ratio of 2.5 to 1 (see Table 1). Forty-four percent of the subjects were black and 56% were white. These data are generally consistent with Network services figures which indicate more males served than females and more whites served than blacks.

TABLE 1

DESCRIPTION: SEX BY RACE
(N=382)

		RACE		
		BLACK	WHITE	TOTAL
SEX				
	MALE	116	159	275
	FEMALE	51	56	107
	TOTALS	167	215	382

Analyses

Two sets of analyses were completed. Descriptive analyses included frequency counts and comparison tables. A Pearson correlation and a chi-square (X^2) were used to test for significance of relationships, each with a .05 level of significance.

Results

Description

Two descriptive analyses were completed. A review of the grade by current placement data (see Table 2) revealed that the number of students provisionally terminated by grade ranged from a low of four students (11th grade) to highs of 38 students (2nd and 7th grades). Grades 9-12 had lower numbers of provisionally terminated students by grade than the other grades as a group. Examination of the placements showed that most students were placed in self-contained, resource, and regular education classes; 30 students (of the 382) were placed in other settings, e.g., post-secondary, employed, home, none. An unexpected result was the order of the number of students by current placement--the largest number of students was placed in regular education classes, the second highest in resource classes, and the third highest in self-contained classes.

A description of the areas of exceptionality for those students placed in special education placements revealed that most students were placed in behavior disorders or SED placements (see Table 3). The second largest number of students was placed in classes for mentally handicapped, and the lowest number of students was placed in learning disabled and behavior disordered/learning disabled classes. These data indicate that many of the provisionally terminated students from Program classes may be displaying academic deficits.

TABLE 2

DESCRIPTION: GRADE BY CURRENT PLACEMENT
(N=382)

GRADE	CURRENT PLACEMENT				
	SELF CONTAINED	RESOURCE	REGULAR EDUCATION	OTHER	TOTAL
PRESCHOOL	6	1	4	15	26
KINDERGARTEN	4	11	19	1	35
1ST	10	9	14	-	33
2ND	12	15	11	-	38
3RD	8	8	8	-	24
4TH	8	13	5	-	26
5TH	6	5	13	-	24
6TH	7	15	9	1	32
7TH	12	13	12	1	38
8TH	8	8	9	-	25
9TH	7	2	6	1	16
10TH	2	4	4	-	10
11TH	2	1	1	-	4
12TH	1	-	3	1	5
OTHER/NA	13	13	10	10	46
TOTALS	106	118	128	30	382

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TABLE 3

DESCRIPTION: EXCEPTIONAL AREA BY CURRENT PLACEMENT (n=237)

EXCEPTIONAL AREAS	CURRENT PLACEMENT: SELF CONTAINED	RESOURCE	OTHER	TOTAL
BEHAVIOR DISORDERED/SED	43	89	-	132
MENTALLY HANDICAPPED	42	7	-	49
OTHER	12	7	15	34
LEARNING DISABLED	5	11	1	17
BEHAVIOR DISORDERED/ LEARNING DISABLED	1	4	-	5
TOTALS	103	118	16	237

Examination of Relationships

Two analyses were completed--one to examine potential academic deficits and one to examine placement by age group.

Potential academic deficits. To explore this area, the chronological age in years as of 9/1/84 (the beginning of the school year) was compared to grade of current placement (see Table 4), and a Pearson correlation was computed between the two variables. As indicated in Table 4, there is generally a five year age span per grade. The first two ages per grade are those which would be expected, e.g., 6 and 7 year olds in 1st grade. (See data to the left of the diagonal line in Table 4 by grade.) The older age children would seem to be those who may have been retained in grade. The correlation coefficient of $r=.68$ ($p<.001$) indicates a significant positive relationship but also accounts for only 46% of the variance. It appears that 149 (or about 39%) of the students may have been retained in grade and may have significant academic deficits.

Placement by age group. The subjects were limited to those placed in self-contained, resource, or regular classes (n=352). The other 30 students (12% of the sample) were distributed across six other placements (post-secondary, employed, Head Start, day care/DD centers, home, other, and none) and were excluded because the frequencies of occurrence were too small to allow for meaningful analyses.

The examination of relationships focused on testing the association between age group (preschool, school age and adolescent) and current placement.

The analysis resulted in a $X^2=10.23$ which was significant at the .04 level. Thus, there was a significant difference between the dimension of placement of students and the dimension of age group of students. Specifically, the nature of this relationship may be summarized by examining the order of placement for the SED students for the three groups. The order of placement for the preschool and adolescent programs was the same--regular education, self-contained, and resource classes; the order for the school age group was resource, regular education, and self-contained classes (See Table 5).

TABLE 4

DESCRIPTION: PLACEMENT GRADE BY AGE IN YEARS AS OF 9/1/84
(N=382)

AGE IN YEARS[a]

PLACEMENT GRADE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19+	TOTAL
PRE		2	5	9	8	2														26
KIN					11	19	4	1												35
1ST						3	16	10	2	2										33
2ND							1	13	18	6										38
3RD								2	11	6	4	1								24
4TH									1	10	8	4	3							26
5TH										3	5	10	5	1						24
6TH											3	10	11	6	2					32
7TH									1			1	16	12	8					38
8TH													1	9	9	5	1			25
9TH														1	3	9	1	2		16
10TH																4	6			10
11TH																	2	2		4
12TH																	1	1	3	5
OTH[b]	2		1	1		1	3	2	5	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	1	2	46
TOTAL	2	2	6	10	19	25	24	28	38	31	23	30	40	33	25	21	14	6	5	382

r=.68 ($p < .001$)

[a] Line in chart indicates age cutoff expected by grade from ages older than expected by grade, e.g., 1st grade expected= 6 years (n=3) and 7 years (n=16) vs. older than expected= 8 years (n=10), 9 years (n=2) and 10 years (n=2).

[b] OTH=OTHER

TABLE 5

CHI SQUARE TEST OF INDEPENDENCE

AGE GROUP BY CURRENT PLACEMENT
(n=352)

	CURRENT PLACEMENT			
AGE GROUP	SELF CONTAINED	RESOURCE	REGULAR EDUCATION	TOTAL
PRESCHOOL	9	2	12	23
SCHOOL AGE	79	102	92	273
ADOLESCENT	18	14	24	56
TOTALS	106	118	128	352

$X^2=10.23$ p .04

Summary and Discussion

The proportions of male and female students are consistent with the results reported by Forness and Caldon (1980) and the Dallas Independent School District (1981). The proportions of black (44%) and white (56%) students is between the results reported by Levitt (1982)--63% white and 37% black and other minorities--and those reported by the Dallas Independent School District (1981)--24% white and 76% black and Hispanic.

A significant number of SED students served in the Georgia Psychoeducational Network is being placed in less restrictive settings on provisional termination from the Programs. These results indicate a higher number being placed in regular education than other similar studies (e.g. Dallas Independent School District (1981)--7% in regular education). The order of proportions placed in regular education, special education self-contained, and special education resource is consistent with the results of the longitudinal study of terminated students in the Network (Moffett and Moore, 1985).

The number of provisional terminations is approximately evenly distributed across preschool, kindergarten, elementary, and middle schools with a decrease in high schools consistent with dropouts and the impact of educational history on seriously handicapped students. About 39% of the students have apparently experienced grade retention during their schooling career, and most of these students seem to have been placed in other special education classes for the mentally handicapped or learning disabled subsequent to provisional termination from the Programs. These results are consistent with results of studies from Epstein and Cullinan (1983), Hill, Minifie and Minifie (1981), and Montgomery and Van Vleet (1978) regarding overall IQ, academic retardation and grade placement for SED students.

The significant relationship between the age group dimension and the placement on provisional termination dimension warrants further investigation. Alternative explanations for this result may be related to chronological age at entry into the SED Program, demographic variables, programming variables, learning characteristics, and variables reflecting scope and degree of handicapping condition(s).

Recommendations

The results of this pilot study support a need for continuing investigation of the descriptive variables to determine their representativeness of the Network and the SED population as a whole and to determine trends which can serve to guide future programmatic decisions.

Regarding the significant relationship between age group and placement when provisionally terminated, additional investigation of potential correlative variables is important. These variables

- chronological age at entry to treatment (Strain, 1982),
- diagnostic classification (DSM-III, 1980)
- severity and prognosis at time of entry to Program,
- marital status of parent(s),
- comparison of these sample figures to Network services data,
- recidivism,
- length of time in Programs,
- academic achievement in the less restrictive setting,
- success in placement on provisional termination,
- multiple measures for specifying social significance and social validity of long term outcomes (Strain, 1981).

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Longitudinal Followup of Students Three to Five Years After Termination from Programs in the Georgia Psychoeducational Network

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The long term impact of services to severely emotionally disturbed (SED) students should be reflected in the placement of these students in less restrictive settings (classes) during their school careers. Because of the extensive evaluation and followup systems which are integral parts of the Network, a pilot study was conducted to identify current class placements of these students and their success in that placement.

The two purposes of this pilot study were: to followup and describe a sample of students who had been terminated from SED Program services for three to five years and to provide recommendations for continued and more indepth research in this area.

Method

Data Collection

Each participating Program was asked to randomly select five students who had been terminated from three to five years--one in lower elementary (grades kindergarten-4), two in upper elementary (grades 5-8), and two at the secondary level (grades 9 through 12).

Each Program submitted the following information on each of the five students: entrance age; date terminated; date of birth; race; sex; family status--single, two parent, foster, other; current placement--regular education, self-contained, resource, post secondary, working, home; primary diagnosis under Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder III (1980) (DSM III); if in school, current academic scores; and if out of school, type of job, post-secondary education, or other. The Network definitions for all varibles were used and were consistent with Georgia definitions, rules, and procedures (Georgia Department of Education, 1983, 1982).

Subjects

The subjects were students who had been terminated from Network Program services from three to five years. Thirteen of the 24 Network Programs provided data on 64 students--13 in the early elementary, 25 at the upper elementary, and 26 at the secondary level. Only one Program provided no data at the upper elementary level; two Programs provided data on only one student at the secondary level and one Program provided data on four students at the secondary level. All other Programs provided data consistent with instructions.

The ratio of males to females was approximately 2:1 and the ratio of blacks to whites was approximately 1:1. The ratio of black to white males and the ratio of black to white females was essentially the same (see Table 1).

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY SEX AND RACE
(N=64)

	RACE		
	BLACK	WHITE	TOTAL
SEX			
MALE	20	25	45
FEMALE	8	11	19
TOTAL	28	36	64

Analyses

Frequency counts, ranges, means and standard deviations were used to describe the sample. Comparisons among selected variables were completed by comparison tables.

Results

An examination of family status by sex and race revealed that there were approximately equal numbers of students from both single and two parent families with only one student being in foster placement (See Table 2).

A review of presumed/known diagnoses under DSM III (1980) revealed seven major categories of diagnoses: neurotic adjustment disorders (n=18), hyperkinetic syndrome (n=9), conduct disorders (n=8), psychoses (n=7), childhood emotional disturbance (n=7), specific delays in development (5) and other (10). (See Table 3)

Examination of time in a Program from the entry into services until final termination from services ranged from three months to ten years, two months with a mean of 2.27 years and a standard deviation of 1.64 years revealing the significant variance among the length of stay for these students. (See Table 4)

The current placement (three to five years after termination from SED services) of these students is shown in Table 5. Of the total 64 students, 30 were either in regular education placement (n=15), post secondary education programs (n=2) or working (n=13). Nine of the total students were either located at home (n=1) or data were unavailable (n=8). Considering those students placed in grades K-12 (n=40), the distribution for regular education (n=15), self contained special education (n=13), and resource special education (n=12) are approximately equal. Of further interest, 50% (13 of 25) adolescents are successfully employed. And the ratio of male to female in regular education, special education self contained, and special education resource is approximately 4:1 consistently. Of those working, 6 are male and 7 are female (See Table 6). Of perhaps the most significance is the result that 51% of the sample do not need any special education services from three to five years after termination from Network Program sevices.

Summary and Discussion

It is possible in the Psychoeducatinoal Network to followup students from three to five years after termination--only 8 of 64 students were unable to be located. This result is higher than the samples obtained in other studies--Leone (1984) was able to followup 18 of 54 students.

The proportions of males (70%) and females (30%) and blacks (44%) and whites (54%) are generally consistent with the results of Leone (1984) and Bloom and Hopewell (1982). The family status results were r to Leone's (1984) study, but different from two other studies. (1982) found 21% of his sample in institutions and Bloom and

TABLE 2

FAMILY STATUS BY RACE AND SEX
(N=64)

	MALE		FEMALE		
FAMILY STATUS[a]	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	TOTALS
SINGLE	12	9	5	3	29
BOTH	8	15	3	8	34
FOSTER	-	1	-	-	1
OTHER	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	20	25	8	11	64

[a] SINGLE=SINGLE PARENT FAMILY; BOTH=TWO PARENT FAMILY; FOSTER=IN FOSTER PLACEMENT; OTHER=OTHER SITUATIONS

TABLE 3

PRESUMED/KNOWN CATEGORY OF DIAGNOSIS[a] BY SEX AND RACE
(N=64)

	MALE		FEMALE		
CATEGORIES BY DIAGNOSIS	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	TOTALS
NEUROTIC ADJUSTMENT DISORDERS	3	9	2	4	18
HYPERKINETIC SYNDROME	4	3	-	2	9
CONDUCT DISORDERS	3	3	2	-	8
PSYCHOSES	2	1	2	2	7
CHILDHOOD EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE	4	2	1	-	7
SPECIFIC DELAYS IN DEVELOPMENT	2	3	-	-	5
OTHER[b]	2	4	1	3	10
TOTALS	20	25	8	11	64

[a] DSM III (1980)
[b] OTHER=PERSONALITY DISORDERS, NEUROTIC DISORDERS, ORGANIC BRAIN SYNDROME, MILD MENTAL HANDICAP

TABLE 4

STUDENTS' TIME IN PROGRAM
(N=64)

TIME IN MONTHS:	3	7	8	9	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	21	22	23
# STUDENTS	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	3	4	1	1	3	2	2

TIME IN MONTHS:	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	33	35	36	38	39	41	43	47	48
# STUDENTS	3	1	2	1	1	1	4	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	1

TIME IN MONTHS:	50	53	58	64	87	122
# STUDENTS	1	1	1	1	1	1

MEAN= 2.27 YEARS
S.D.= 1.64 YEARS

TABLE 5

PLACEMENT BY GRADE IN SCHOOL
(N=64)

	GRADE														
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	OTHER	TOTAL
PLACEMENT															
REGULAR EDUCATION			1			1	2	1	2	3	2		3		15
SELF CONTAINED				1	3		3		2		2		2		13
RESOURCE					2	1	2	2	2	2	2		1		12
POST SECONDARY														2	2
WORKING														13	13
HOME														1	1
DATA UNAVAILABLE														8	8
TOTALS	-	-	1	1	5	2	7	3	6	5	6	-	6	24	64

TABLE 6

SUMMARY OF STUDENT PLACEMENT BY SEX AND RACE
(N=64)

	MALE		FEMALE		
	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	TOTALS
PLACEMENTS					
REGULAR EDUCATION	6	7	1	1	15
SELF CONTAINED	7	4	1	1	13
RESOURCE	3	5	2	2	12
POST SECONDARY	-	1	1	-	2
WORKING	1	5	3	4	13
HOME	-	1	-	-	1
NONE	3	2	-	3	8
TOTALS	20	25	8	11	64

Hopewell (1982) found about 50% of their sample in some form of custody. In this study, no students were in custody or placed in institutions.

This study's mean of 2.27 years in Network Program services compares favorably with the results of other studies: Schneider and Byrne (1984): 1 to 2 years; Leone (1984): 24.1 months; and Levitt (1982): 22 months. The standard deviations and ranges for length of time in treatment are large for all studies.

The placement results of this study indicate a proportion of students placed in classes in the public schools or working equal to or higher than those of other studies. Bloom and Hopewell (1982) found 54% of their students enrolled in public school programs but 43% were reinstitutionalized over the period of the study. Levitt (1982) found 25% of his sample returned to regular public schools and 65% were in either full time or part time special education placement with 10% not followed up. Leone (1984) found 7 adolescents working, 4 adolescents in school, and 3 adolescents in both school and work. Other studies did not report sex or race differences.

Recommendations

For future prediction and planning purposes, the results of this study indicate that most students will require approximately two and one-quarter years of services from a Program in order to be successfully placed in a less restrictive environment.

Continued longitudinal research in the future should consider enhanced methodology including social significance and validity of long term outcome measures and design and measurement of more comprehensive data bases (Strain, 1981). Particular factors which should be considered include:

- -chronological age at entry into Network Program;
- -academic achievement prior to and subsequent to Network Program services;
- -diagnosis, severity and prognosis information at time of entry into an SED Program;
- -retention in grade prior to and subsequent to Network Program services;
- -length of time in SED Programs and alternative service options available in the community;
- -IEP services and interagency cooperation and coordination in providing comprehensive services to the SED SED student and his family;
- -degree to which extra-treatment environments in which the child functions are altered to support change.

This area of study can be one of the most significant in the investigation of effectiveness of the investment of funds to serve severely handicapped students and their families.

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Update on Research in Progress

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Overview of Studies

The Programs of the Georgia Psychoeducational Program Network are currently involved in a number of research studies. These studies are individual Program initiated and designed to address a specific identified need of that Program. While these studies are Program specific in origin, the results will be shared with all Network Programs and may have implications statewide. The studies can be grouped into three categories, one each designed to answer questions regarding:

1. What is the effectiveness of placement in a Psychoeducational Program?
2. What is the effectiveness of specific intervention techniques?
3. How are severely emotionally disturbed students identified effectively?

Effectiveness of Psychoeducational Program Placement

Three Programs are conducting studies which focus on the impact of psychoeducational placement on the integration into the regular school program of students who have been terminated from the Program. The Golden Isles Psychoeducational Program (Brunswick) is comparing the status of students terminated from Programs who have returned to a less restrictive environment in the public schools with students who have returned to public school programs from a more restrictive residential placement. The major question of this study relates not only to program effectiveness but also to cost effectiveness. In the Cobb-Douglas Psychoeducational Program (Marietta), a study designed to provide placement data on students who have returned to less restrictive settings during the past two years is underway. In a third study, the Southwest Georgia Psychoeducational Services (Thomasville) is conducting a three year follow-up of students to determine the effectiveness of psychoeducational placement by identifying student changes in behavior, academics, and self-concept.

In addition to the studies conducted by the individual Programs, the Network collects annual data on the status of adolescent students who have graduated or exited high school. These data describe where the students go once they leave the public school system and provide information on the relative effectiveness of placement in a Psychoeducational Program.

Effectiveness of Intervention Strategies

With the constant search for specific techniques that are effective with severely emotionally disturbed student, numerous studies are

being conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention strategies. In the DeKalb-Rockdale Psychoeducational Program (Scottdale) specific information regarding behavior, intervention strategies, results, time involved and similar variables is computerized to begin a statistical match of behavior with successful intervention strategies. In the South Metro Psychoeducational Program (Atlanta), the concept of in-school suspension is being studied as to impact on certain behaviors of the severely emotionally disturbed student.

The concept of intervention strategies is also being studied beyond the direct impact on the student. In an effort to increase parental participation, the Griffin Area Psychoeducational Program is conducting a study to determine if parental involvement can be increased as a result of specific incentive strategies. The Alpine Psychoeducational Program (Gainesville) is studying the effectiveness of structured family counseling on the success of the student in the Program.

Identification of Severely Emotionally Disturbed Students

In an effort to provide guidelines for differentiating the severely emotionally disturbed student from the socially maladjusted student, the Dalton Psychoeducational Program is developing a severity index and is currently collecting data for norming purposes. Several of the Programs jointly developed a checklist for assisting in the differentiation of the socially maladjusted from the emotionally disturbed with plans for field testing it this year.

The South Metro Psychoeducational Program (Atlanta) is developing a profile of the typical student served within the Program for use in the screening process. Another of the Programs is studying the revised Behavior Problem Checklist as an instrument to distinguish between the student served in public school behavior disorders classes and those served in the Psychoeducational Program. The Cobb-Douglas Psychoeducational Program (Marietta) and the North Metro Psychoeducational Program (Atlanta) are studying the establishment of norms on the Behavior Evaluation Scale for identification.

Research Consortium Activities

Additionally, the Psychoeducational Research Consortium Project will be funded for implementation during 1985-1986. Final approval is currently pending. This Research Consortium will investigate several topics including the proportion of boys and girls in the normal population as compared to the SED sample, the proportion of blacks and whites in the normal population as compared to the SED sample, the proportion of SED students in rural and urban areas as compared to the normal population, the achievement scores of SED students to those of the normal population, the proportion of SED students identified by chronological age, relationships among demographic variables for the SED sample, descriptors of teachers and related personnel in the Network, characteristics of major service delivery in the Network, and cost analyses in the Network.

Summary

These studies represent only a sample of the formal and informal evaluations that are continuously in progress within the Psychoeducational Programs. The Network is committed to disseminating the findings of these studies, with emphasis on programmatic implications, via publications in professional journals and others means. It is hope that the dissemination of this information will be of significant value in providing the highest quality of services to severely emotionally disturbed students and their families.

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