

What is a _____
**SCHOOL
PSYCHOLOGIST?**

Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life

School psychologists help children and youth succeed in school, at home, and throughout life. They apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior to support academic success, promote positive relationships, and strengthen school communities.

By working with students, families, and educators, school psychologists help create safe, supportive environments where all students can thrive.



WHAT DOES A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST DO?

School psychologists use evidence-based practices to support student success. They:

- Identify and address learning and behavior challenges
- Support positive mental health and social-emotional growth
- Use data to improve schools' teaching and learning strategies
- Strengthen family-school partnerships
- Promote equity and inclusion in education
- Provide crisis prevention and response services



WHAT TRAINING DO SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS RECEIVE?

Becoming a school psychologist requires specialized graduate-level education and supervised experience. Most school psychologists hold at least a **specialist-level degree**. Many also earn **doctoral degrees**, which include advanced research and practice training. All school psychologists complete coursework in:

- Psychological and educational assessment
- Academic and behavioral interventions
- Counseling and consultation
- Special education and diversity
- Ethics, law, and professional standards

To practice in the United States, school psychologists must be **state certified or licensed**. Many also earn **NASP's Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP)** credential, which recognizes advanced professional preparation and competence.



WHERE DO SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS WORK?

Most school psychologists work in public K–12 schools, but many also serve in:

- Early childhood programs and preschools
- Private and charter schools
- School district offices or education agencies
- Colleges and universities
- Mental health centers, hospitals, and community agencies
- Private practice

Regardless of setting, their goal is consistent—to help all students reach their full potential.



WHY DO STUDENTS NEED SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS?

Students may face challenges such as anxiety, learning difficulties, managing emotions, navigating social settings, or regulating their own behavior. School psychologists help them build skills and support their well-being—so they can succeed in school and beyond.

HOW DO I CONTACT A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST?

Every public school has access to a school psychologist. However, some school psychologists work in more than one school, so they may not be on-site every day. To contact a school psychologist, start by asking at your school's main office or check your school or district website for contact details.

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