Using Systems Theory in School Assessment and Intervention: A Structural Model for School Psychologists

Marian C. Fish
Queens College, City University of New York

Shashi Jain
Graduate Center, City University of New York

Minuchin's structural model of the family provides a theoretical perspective potentially useful for the school psychologist working with children. The components of the family model: (a) matrix of identity, (b) structure, and (c) adaptation are applied to the family and the classroom resulting in an ecologically valid view of the child's problem. Implications for assessment and intervention are presented.

The advantages of adopting a systems approach in dealing with children's problems at school have been reported extensively in the literature (e.g., Conoley, 1987; DiCocco, 1986; Fine & Holt, 1983; Hobbs, 1978; Pfeiffer & Tittler, 1983; Power & Bartholomew, 1985; Tittler & Cook, 1981). The use of systems approaches stems from disenchantment with linear models because such linear models do not provide a comprehensive picture of the child's problems (Haley, 1986). These linear approaches often ignore the contextual and interactional variables in the child's environment (Wendt & Zake, 1984). Conoley (1987) was critical of the shallowness of individually oriented assessment and presented a clear rationale for increased emphasis on families by school psychologists. She described the usefulness of general systems theory as a unifying perspective.

Systems theory provides a framework that guides us to form an ecologically valid view of the child's problem. In simple terms, a system is a group or a unit of interconnected parts where a change in one part is reverberated throughout the unit (e.g., von Bertalanffy, 1968). Smaller units become part of larger units which are interconnected to even larger units. A child, for instance, belongs to the family system as well as the school system; school and family belong to the larger units of county, state, country, and culture. Walsh (1982) summarized the rules and principles that apply to all systems. Systems theory can be applied to the family, classroom, and school system (Conoley, 1987; Fish & Jain, 1985; Fisher, 1986).

Despite the recognition and promise of ecological assessment and intervention, the use of systems approaches has remained limited outside of clinical settings. Fine and Holt (1983) suggested that systemic intervention is difficult and requires sophisticated training unavailable to school psychologists. All systems are resistant to change, and

when pushed, tend to return to the status quo. Further, parents and teachers may be reluctant to see themselves as contributing to a child's problems. Most critically, perhaps, there is a lack of data-based research to support the efficacy of a systems approach within the schools (Fine & Holt, 1983).

Conoley (1987) focused on establishing theoretical and practical bridges between schools and families. The purpose of this article is to operationalize the systems' theoretical viewpoint using structural theory and to demonstrate its usefulness for school psychologists. The complimentarity of a family systems perspective with other assessment and intervention approaches is considered.

STRUCTURAL THEORY

Of the several major systems theories (e.g., Bowenian, strategic, experiential), structural theory, developed by Minuchin (1974), presents the clearest delineated constructs (Nichols, 1984). These constructs provide guidelines for assessment and intervention, a model of normal family development, and empirical evidence to support the constructs (e.g., Minuchin, Baker, Rosman, Liebman, Milman, & Todd, 1975; Perosa & Perosa, 1981). In addition, structural family therapy is especially concerned with interfaces between the family and the community (e.g., through social agencies and schools; Green & Framo, 1981).

Structural theory is a particularly appropriate approach for school psychologists to apply when dealing with children's problems in the school. We explore how Minuchin's structural model can guide school psychologists' assessment and intervention. Minuchin (1974) described three important components in his model of family functioning that may also be applied to other systems such as schools and classrooms: (a) matrix of identity, (b) structure, and (C) adaptation.

Matrix of Identity

An important function of the family is to give the child a sense of belonging and a sense of separateness. The family provides the child with a last name and a first name. The family teaches the child rules, roles, and codes of social functioning by making the child adapt to the family's code of behavior; this develops a sense of security in the child. At the same time the family adapts to the idiosyncratic needs of the child, supports the child, and creates a sense of individuation and autonomy, the family considers the developmental needs and/or specific educational and emotional needs of the child.

The school system also facilitates both a sense of belonging and autonomy. It promotes the sense of belonging by providing consistent rules and regulations, space, and time for the child. Just as the family has set routines, there are daily routines of the school which are consistently followed over a period of about 12 years.

All schools have a name; many schools have uniforms or jackets with the school name or symbol giving the child an identity. This sense of belonging or identification with the school lingers on years after graduation, evidenced at reunions and sports events. Similarly, the classroom subsystem promotes belonging at another level; the child is a member of a specific class (e.g., 7-1 and 7-3).

A school system's particular role is to promote autonomy by teaching the basic academic skills, by setting higher expectations with each passing year, and by providing simulations of life experiences so students can practice before they enter the "real

world." For example, students begin school with one teacher in a classroom. The atmosphere is nurturing and supportive with few demands made. As they move upward through the grades, they have more teachers and eventually change classrooms continually (e.g., high school). As they advance, homework requirements, both frequency and amount, are increased.

Although these examples demonstrate the important functions within the school system, the involvement of the schools in the identity process is, of course, more superficial than the involvement of the family. The biological connection is a consideration that makes a difference (Bowen, 1985). Few children have dependency needs on schools. Haley (1980) described the intense role played by the family in promoting (or not) autonomy when a child leaves home, yet few teachers have trouble promoting children out of their classrooms, and only a few children have trouble leaving.

Structure

Minuchin's central construct is that of structure. The structure pertains to the organization of the system consisting of subsystems and boundaries. Subsystems are units of single or multiple individuals who join together to perform various tasks. The family has numerous subsystems, some generic (e.g., those formed by generation, sex, and function) and others, idiosyncratic (e.g., those formed perhaps by mutual interests that vary according to the family's needs). Boundaries are invisible demarcations regulating the amount of contact between subsystems.

For the family to carry out its functioning, the boundaries between these subsystems have to be clear. According to Minuchin (1974), most functional families cope with everyday demands of living by having flexible boundaries that vary according to the nature of the task they have to carry out. They can be enmeshed at times and disengaged at other times. An enmeshed family pattern is one in which boundaries are diffused and the differentiation among members is vague. A subsystem in which a parent is overinvolved in a child's life is said to be enmeshed. A disengaged family pattern is one that has rigid boundaries that impede communication and limit relatedness. An example would be the parent–adolescent subsystem with no parental supervision of activities. All families have some enmeshed and some disengaged subsystems. Dysfunctional families fall at the extreme ranges — either remaining enmeshed or disengaged, and not being able to handle new situations effectively.

Similarly, a school has a definite structure of its own. Similarities between the family system and classroom system have been discussed by several authors (Friedman, 1969, 1978; Pfeiffer & Tittler, 1983). Like the family, the school has components of boundaries and subsystems. There is a teacher subsystem, a student subsystem, and a classroom subsystem. There are generic subsystems within the classroom as well (e.g., reading groups, math groups, and other ability and gender subsystems). In addition, idiosyncratic subsystems, such as "popular" youngsters, exist. In order for the school system to work smoothly, clarity of boundaries, clarity of communication, and cohesiveness within the subsystem is required. It is important that there be clear boundaries between the teacher and the child, although the teacher may need to be more enmeshed or disengaged in a particular situation depending on the needs of the child. Dysfunction may occur when the boundary between the teacher and children is rigid such as a teacher being unresponsive to illness or crisis in the lives of the children. Or, classroom dysfunction may emerge when a special education teacher is overly involved with the children, protecting them from routine interaction with mainstream peers and teachers and hindering their autonomy.

Functional classroom subsystems should have clear rules based on teacher expect-ancies of children's behavior. The clearer the teacher states these rules, the higher the probability that the students will follow them. Both functional families and classrooms need to have a clear hierarchy where parents or teacher stay in charge, but allow children to contribute to family or classroom decisions when appropriate.

Adaptation

How the family adapts or responds to changing developmental needs of its members and to significant situational events is another index that can be used to measure the system's success. The two demands, from within and without, require a constant transformation of the position of family members in relation to one another, so they can grow while the family maintains continuity. If a family responds to stresses such as these with rigidity, dysfunctional patterns occur, and these may eventually create problems or exacerbate the already existing problems in the child. For example, simple fears may develop into serious phobias if parents continually overprotect a child rather than allowing the child to gradually cope with the fear.

The school system must respond to changes in the external environment as well as to the changing developmental needs of the child. Providing evening conferences for working or single parents, after school enrichment programs, and educational pro-grams on developmental milestones, such as adolescence or divorce, sexual abuse, and alcoholism, are some examples of the adaptability of the school system.

Minuchin (1974) adopted a life cycle perspective where the family's functioning is related to the family's developmental stages. Children and teachers in the classroom system can also be viewed through this developmental perspective. The needs of the students and teachers differ according to their developmental stages. Kindergarten youngsters require more enmeshed transactions with their teachers than high school seniors.

Dysfunction in the child occurs when families are unable to adapt. Many times a child's problems in the classroom are reflective of the family system's stresses (Guerin & Katz, 1984; Rutter, 1985). At other times, the child's problems can be related to structural rigidities of the classroom itself (Fisher, 1986; Plas, 1986). Finally, dysfunc-tion in the child also occurs if the two main systems, school and home, clash in their expectations of the child and how the child should learn (DiCocco, 1986; Lusterman, 1985; Power & Bartholomew, 1987).

SUMMARY

Parallels between the family system and classroom system have been presented. Minuchin used the construct of structure as the parameter for measuring functioning in a family, which can be used in a similar fashion to measure classroom functioning. A family or classroom system with functional structures will be successful in adapting to change and promoting the matrix of identity in its members.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION

Let us consider the case of Tom, a fourth grader, referred by his teacher, who is performing below grade level in reading and who has been complaining of illnesses and injuries over a period of months. Wendt and Zake (1984) stated that a major purpose

in the conceptual shift to a system's approach is to perceive the child's problems as ongoing, interactional, and interdependent between the self and the environment. Although the focus of the assessment may be on interactional problems within a system, the use of formal assessment including psychoeducational testing is not precluded. A systems perspective compliments other assessment approaches. In many cases, there may be an identifiable personal deficit (e.g., deficient decoding skills and poor vocabulary) that may be exacerbated by systems difficulties but does exist in and of itself. In this case, however, testing revealed that Tom had average intelligence and skill development and was in good health.

Classroom System Assessment

To begin the assessment and intervention, the school psychologist must decide which systems are involved. Plas (1986) suggested that it is better to adopt a conservative approach and initially focus only on those components of the systems related to the problem, that is, the child referred (Tom), and the person doing the referring (the teacher).

Joining. The next step is to join the relevant parts of the system. Joining refers to creating an active affiliation with the system. The purpose of joining is for the school psychologist to temporarily become part of the system that will enhance his or her ability to bring about change (Piercy et al., 1986). Joining may mean simply saying hello to Tom or his teacher and creating a feeling that you are nonthreatening (see Johnston & Fields, 1981, for specific examples). Often school psychologists have been perceived as outsiders or experts with the knowledge and power to solve a problem. Joining acknowledges competence and contributions of all involved. In the process of joining, the school psychologist needs to determine both Tom's and the teacher's formulation of the problem, possible solutions, and what steps have been taken to resolve the problem. In addition, the school psychologist must assess the teacher's perception of Tom's strengths. If the response of the teacher reveals an overall negative view of Tom, it suggests that the classroom lacks the elements of acceptance and support necessary to give him a sense of belonging and autonomy. On the other hand, if Tom's teacher is able to identify strengths as well as weaknesses, the classroom is a more facilitating system for the development of autonomy and a sense of belonging (Jain, 1987).

Enactment. To gather information from relevant systems, the structural concept of enactment is useful. Enactment is the acting out of transactional patterns in the classroom that may pertain to problematic situations. The school psychologist asks the teacher to create the situation that has been troublesome and then observes the sequences of behavior. Emphasis is placed on the process of what is happening rather than content. For example, when the teacher reports that Tom does not participate in reading group, the school psychologist suggests an enactment of the reading session to note boundaries and transactional patterns. The school psychologist may observe that the teacher, who seats Tom next to her and turns the pages for him, seems overinvolved and is undermining his competency. When it is Tom's turn to read, he complains about headaches, toothaches, or injuries; the teacher sympathizes and doesn't make Tom read. This enactment suggests that the presenting problem is serving a function within this system of limiting Tom's reading group participation and supporting the teacher's "babying" behavior. A distance needs to be created between the teacher and Tom.

Resistance to enactment may result from constraints of schedules and time pressures.

This may be countered by successful joining and the establishment of good rapport with the system members (i.e., child and teacher). The importance of creating the problematic situation(s) when its natural occurrence is unavailable for observation can be explained to the participants.

Classroom System Intervention

When choosing from the numerous systemic interventions available, the school psychologist reviews the assessment findings and creates a "map" delineating boundaries, autonomy–belonging, and the adaptability of the system. In Tom's case, his autonomy is undermined and the boundary between him and the teacher is diffused. Consequently, adaptation is not occurring, and Tom continues to complain and remain at the same achievement level; the system is "stuck." Intervention would focus on clarifying the boundaries, thereby, allowing Tom to enhance his competence and alleviating the teacher's stress by disengaging him or her. This might come about by using direct, indirect, or paradoxical techniques aimed at modifying the way the teacher and Tom relate to one another. The ultimate goal is for the system to maintain itself without the use of the presenting problems (Minuchin, 1974). Some examples of techniques are described next.

Reframing. Reframing refers to changing the meaning of the event or behavior and presenting it in a more positive light. Bowman and Goldberg (1983) explained the usefulness of this approach and demonstrated how school psychologists can impact family or classroom dynamics by using this technique. Tom's complaining behavior might be reframed, for example, as attempts at creativity (i.e., making up stories and sharing them with others). The teacher might then develop a different perspective on Tom's problem and change his or her own behavior accordingly, for example, by giving him storytelling projects and then having him read these stories in the classroom in spite of his complaints.

Boundary marking. If the observations reveal that boundaries are enmeshed or disengaged, intervention strategies of boundary marking can be used; they involve reinforcing appropriate boundaries and modifying inappropriate ones. Because Tom's teacher is overly involved, it may be a good idea to have a classroom aide or peer tutor work with Tom under teacher supervision. In addition, Tom's seat in the group should be moved further away from the teacher.

Task setting. When given assigned tasks, members of a system can experiment with a different way of relating to one another within a structured, specific situation (Dowling & Osborne, 1985). The major concern of the task is to restructure relationships and to raise competencies of the members involved. For example, the task assigned may be to have the teacher let Tom complain for 3 min and then ask him to read. This intervention authorizes the teacher to tolerate Tom's wimpering for a limited period and then insist that Tom participate, putting the teacher back "in charge." This also raises Tom's competence by his actual practice of reading. Had a behavioral intervention been used, such as delivering positive reinforcement with a token when Tom read, the competency of the teacher in handling the situation may not have come into focus. Systemic interventions benefit both the teacher and Tom. That is, behavioral intervention may focus on a single target behavior thus ignoring the reciprocal relationship between the child and teacher. The main responsibility in

coming up with the solution is external to the system. The systemic solutions that emanate from the members involved encourage competency.

Although there are numerous intervention possibilities, considerable training, appropriate supervision, and a clear understanding of the purpose of each intervention are necessary for effective use.

Family System Assessment and Intervenion

When the problems do not get resolved in the classroom system, they may extend to the family system of that child. If Tom continues to have problems despite the interventions in the classroom, the problem may involve his family system (e.g., Carlson, 1987). Joining and observing the family can be carried out through a family conference with the school psychologist. Including siblings in the conference (whenever possible) not only provides a source of information, but also serves a preventive function as they too are at risk to develop psychological difficulties (Hannah & Midlarsky, 1985). Foster (1984) suggested that by joining the family system, the school psychologist can serve as a translator of school language for families to enable them to interact more competently with the school. How to approach and assess the family has been detailed elsewhere (Aponte, 1976; Perosa & Perosa, 1981; Smith, 1978; Worden, 1981). Carlson and Grotevant (1987) recently critiqued family assessment instruments and noted that the structural framework can be emphasized and assessed in a manner similar to the classroom. In speaking with the family, the school psychologist needs to determine if they recognize the difficulty without placing blame and if they view Tom globally as a "problem" or accept his difficulties without generalizing them to the whole child. His sense of belonging and autonomy can be assessed in this manner. Knowledge of stresses on the family (e.g., ill relative, newborn baby, unemployment), and resources available to the family (e.g., grandparent, money) will facilitate decisions about intervention. The assessment may reveal that Tom's difficulties are related to subsystem dysfunctioning in the family. For instance, his autonomy and competency may be undermined because of his mother's underinvolvement with him; this underinvolvement between mother and child may exist because the mother is preoccupied with an ill sibling. Again, intervention to clarify boundaries and build competency in the child becomes necessary. The school psychologist continues to join and share information with the family using the techniques just described. The literature to date has primarily focused on family assessment rather than the school system (Carlson, 1987; Fulmer, Cohen, & Monaco, 1985; Perosa & Perosa, 1981).

School-Family System Assessment and Intervention

Often the problems of the child are not exclusive to the classroom or to the family, but may be due to the discrepancy or clash between these systems. The third aspect of assessment pertains to mapping the relationship between the family and the classroom. In assessing the match between the values and expectations of these two systems, the past history of the family's transactions with the school is often revealing. Perhaps other siblings have brought the parents into contact with the school before; the resulting relationship must be considered. At times the structure of the classroom and homes are incongruent. Okun (1984) suggested that these difficulties may be adaptive rather than pathological. However, Hansen (1986) presented evidence that discontinuities in interaction rules that the child experiences in the family and in the classroom can influence academic performance. He concluded that a child from any type of family can be disadvantaged in some classrooms and may be advantaged in

others. Lusterman (1984) discussed problems resulting from family and classroom systems that are similar in structure—either both rigid or both chaotic; he suggested that these situations are likely to exacerbate dysfunction.

If the two systems have conflicting conditions, Tom may lack the skills to deal with them. Under these circumstances, the school psychologist needs to assess and develop the communication between the two systems so that Tom can respond differently to each social context. Keeping the structural model in mind can be helpful. The complementary roles of classroom and home in enhancing Tom's sense of belonging and autonomy should be pointed out to the family and teacher. For example, Tom may be feigning illness in the classroom and hindering his reading progress; the teacher blames the parents for their lack of concern with Tom's well-being and keeps sending notes to Tom's parents. Tom's parents have been perceived as uninterested and neglectful in the past by the teacher. The parents, however, have another child who is ill and consuming all their attention, a stress resulting in their underinvolvement with Tom, which is promoting dysfunctional behavior. They are annoyed that the teacher is pressuring them at this time.

McDaniel (1981) suggested that systemic interventions assume people in the problematic systems have resources and abilities, but are "stuck." This often occurs during points of transition from one developmental stage to the next (Minuchin, 1974). The role of the school psychologist is to get them "unstuck" and move them on to the next developmental stage. DiCocco (1986) discussed distinct stages that family–school relationships go through depending on the degree and nature of the child's problem. Initially, the teacher and the parents bear responsibility for the child in their respective settings. If the problem worsens, parents are asked to step in and help with the child's school difficulty. DiCocco (1986) said that this works if the child believes the parents and teacher are working collaboratively and agree on the appropriate actions to take. In Tom's situation, there is a negative sequence of blame and feelings of incompetence on the part of both the teacher and the parents. Interventions to bring about collaboration between the two systems might include a temporary restructuring of the hierarchy so that the parents are relieved of the responsibility for handling Tom's school problems and the teacher's competence and perception of the parents is changed. This could be done through a conference in school or in the child's home, permitting Tom to see the collaboration between the systems and the willingness of each system to recognize the other's role. Alternatively, there are times when breaking the contact between schools and families is an appropriate intervention (Lusterman, 1984). Lusterman (1984) proposed interventions that decrease the intensity of communication when the systems are both rigid and interventions that increase the pressure for action when the systems are chaotic. He also described an intervention when school–family communication is first forbidden and then gradually restored (Lusterman, 1985) when school–family contact has deteriorated and worsened the situation.

DISCUSSION

The structural model provides a theoretical perspective for the school psychologist working with children by considering the systems involved. Whereas many of the assessment and intervention strategies suggested herein seem similar to traditional classroom observation or teacher and family consultation, the difference lies in their operationalization from a systemic viewpoint rather than from a linear perspective. A caution that assessment and interventions described will be only as effective as the

clinical skill level of the person using them is in order. Although the theory may be useful in understanding systems in general, application of structural strategies in the schools should be learned under clinical supervision, not solely through reading. Actual practice should be conducted only by those who have been supervised. This caveat has implications for training programs that are already overburdened with requirements for school psychologists, but who need to train school psychologists to build bridges between schools and families (Conoley, 1987). Conoley and Gutkin (1986) presented a strong case for the establishment of school psychology training that emphasizes the demands of an indirect service practice context. They suggested that training programs with either an ecological or reciprocal determinism framework (e.g., systems) are most congruent with the preparation of school psychologists for indirect service. This implies that attention to teachers, families, and others in the child's life is necessary for change. The structural approach provides practical guidelines for the school psychologist to collaborate with these other systems.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

REFERENCES

Aponte, H. (1976). The family–school interview: An ecostructural approach. *Family Process, 15,* 303–311.

Bowen, M. (1985). *Family therapy in clinical practice.* New York: Aronson.

Bowman, P., & Goldberg, M. (1983). Reframing: A tool for the school psychologist. *Psychology in the Schools, 20,* 210–214.

Carlson, C. I. (1987). Resolving school problems with structural family therapy. *School Psychology Review, 16,* 457–468.

Carlson, C. I., & Grotevant, H. D. (1987). A comparative review of family rating scales: Guidelines for clinicians and researchers. *Journal of Family Psychology, 1,* 23–47.

Conoley, J. C. (1987). Schools and families: Theoretical and practical bridges. *Professional School Psychology, 2,* 191–203.

Conoley, J. C., & Gutkin, T. B. (1986). Educating school psychologists for the real world. *School Psychology Review, 15,* 457–465.

DiCocco, B. E. (1986). A guide to family/school interventions for the family therapist. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 8,* 50–61.

Dowling, E., & Osborne, E. (Eds.). (1985). *The family and the school: A joint systems approach to problems with children.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Fine, M. J., & Holt, P. (1983). Intervening with school problems: A family system's perspective. *Psychology in the Schools, 20,* 59–66.

Fish, M. C., & Jain, S. (1985). A systems approach in working with learning disabled children: Implications for the school. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 18,* 592–595.

Fisher, L. (1986). Systems-based consultation with schools. In L. C. Wynne, S. H. McDaniel, & T. T. Weber (Eds.), *Systems consultation* (pp. 342–356). New York: Guilford.

Foster, M. A. (1984). Schools. In M. Berger & G. Jurkovic (Eds.), *Practicing family therapy in diverse settings* (pp. 110–141). Boston: Jossey-Bass.

Friedman, R. (1969). A structured family interview in the assessment of school learning disorders. *Psychology in the Schools, 6,* 162–171.

Friedman, R. (1978). Using the family and school in the treatment of learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 11,* 378–382.

Fulmer, R. H., Cohen, S., & Monaco, G. (1985). Using psychological assessment in structural family therapy. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 18,* 145–150.

Green, R. J., & Framo, J. L. (Eds.). (1981). *Family therapy: Major contributions.* New York: International Universities Press.

Guerin, P., & Katz, A. (1984). The theory in therapy of families with school related problems: Triangles and

a hypothesis testing model. In J. C. Hansen & B. F. Okun (Eds.), *Family therapy with school related problems* (pp. 29-45). Rockville, MD: Aspen Systems Corp.

Haley, J. (1980). *Leaving home: The therapy of disturbed young people.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Haley, J. (1986). Behavior modification and a family view of children. In H. C. Fishman & B. L. Rosman (Eds.), *Evolving models for family change* (pp. 41-61). New York: Guilford.

Hannah, M. E., & Midlarsky, E. (1985). Siblings of the handicapped: A literature review for school psychologists. *School Psychology Review, 14,* 510-520.

Hansen, D. A. (1986). Family-school articulations: The effects of interaction rule mismatch. *American Educational Research Journal, 23,* 643-659.

Hobbs, N. (1978). Families, schools and communities: An ecosystem for children. *Teachers College Record, 79,* 756-766.

Jain, S. (1987). *Family process questionnaire.* Unpublished manuscript, Graduate Center, City University of New York, New York.

Johnston, J. C., & Fields, P. A. (1981). School consultation with the "classroom family." *The School Counselor, 29,* 141-148.

Lusterman, D-D. (1984, June). *School and family as ecosystem: An application of Olson, Sprenkle and Russell's Circumplex Model.* Paper presented at the meeting of the American Family Therapy Association, New York, NY.

Lusterman, D-D. (1985). An ecosystemic approach to family-school problems. *American Journal of Family Therapy, 13,* 22-30.

McDaniel, S. H. (1981). Treating school problems in family therapy. *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 15,* 214-222.

Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Minuchin, S., Baker, L., Rosman, B., Liebman, R., Milman, L., & Todd, T. (1975). A conceptual model of psychosomatic illness in children. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 32,* 1031-1038.

Nichols, M. P. (1984). *Family therapy: Concepts and methods.* New York: Gardner.

Okun, B. F. (1984). Family therapy in the schools. In J. C. Hansen & B. F. Okun (Eds.), *Family therapy with school related problems* (pp. 1-12). Rockville, MD: Aspen Systems Corp.

Perosa, L. M., & Perosa, S. L. (1981). The school counselor's use of structural family therapy with learning disabled students. *The School Counselor, 29,* 152-155.

Pfeiffer, S. I., & Tittler, B. I. (1983). Utilizing the multidisciplinary team to facilitate a school–family systems orientation. *School Psychology Review, 12,* 169-173.

Piercy, F. P., Sprenkle, D. H., Avis, J. M., Bagarozzi, D. A., Keeney, B. P., Mace, D. R., & Thomas, F. N. (1986). *Family therapy sourcebook.* New York: Guilford.

Plas, J. M. (1986). *Systems psychology in the school.* New York: Pergamon.

Power, T. J., & Bartholomew, K. L. (1985). Getting uncaught in the middle: A case study in family–school consultation. *School Psychology Review, 14,* 222-229.

Power, T. J., & Bartholomew, K. L. (1987). Family–school relationship patterns: An ecological assessment. *School Psychology Review, 16,* 498-512.

Rutter, M. (1985). Family and school influences on behavior development. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 26,* 349-368.

Smith, A. (1978). Encouraging the family system in school-related behavior problems. *Psychology in the Schools, 15,* 379-386.

Tittler, B. I., & Cook, V. J. (1981). Relationship among family, school and clinic: Towards a systems approach. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 10,* 184-187.

Von Bertalanffy, L. (1968). *General Systems Theory: Foundations, developments, applications.* New York: Braziller.

Walsh, F. (Ed.). (1982). *Normal family processes.* New York: Guilford.

Wendt, R. N., & Zake, J. (1984). Family systems theory and school psychology: Implications for training and practice. *Psychology in the Schools, 21,* 204-209.

Worden, M. (1981). Classroom behavior as a function of the family system. *The School Counselor, 28,* 179-188.