

# SickKids<sup>®</sup>

Centre for  
Community  
Mental Health

Intervention Practicum Placement  
in Clinical Child & Adolescent  
Psychology  
2021-22

Toronto,  
Ontario, Canada



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# About us



SickKids Centre for Community Mental Health (SickKids CCMH) is a multi-professional, not-for-profit, children's mental health centre located in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. SickKids CCMH provides primary prevention, early intervention, and clinical treatment services to infants, children and youth (from birth to 18) and to their families and communities. Services at SickKids CCMH are enriched by activities in research, program evaluation, the education and training of mental health professionals and the use of volunteers.

The programs offered to families at SickKids CCMH are housed in two main facilities within the city of Toronto and include prevention/early intervention programs, outpatient programs, intensive services for children (which includes day treatment & Section 23 classrooms), and an intensive services for youth program (which includes Section 23 classrooms and a residential treatment program). Treatment services to clients include assessment, individual therapy, family therapy, group therapy, and parent-child therapy, as well as liaison and consultation with community caregivers (e.g., day care providers, physicians, teachers).

Affiliated with the University of Toronto and accredited by the Council on Accreditation for Services to Children and Families, SickKids CCMH is also a member of Children's Mental Health Ontario.

On average, SickKids CCMH has about 225 staff. This includes full-time, part-time and contract staff; consultants; trainees from a variety of disciplines (early childhood education, child and youth care, psychiatry, psychology, social work and art/expressive arts); and volunteers. More detailed information about SickKids CCMH's programs and services are at [www.sickkidscmh.ca](http://www.sickkidscmh.ca).

SickKids CCMH has a rich history of teaching and training interns and practicum students across multiple disciplines including psychology, social work, psychiatry, and art therapy stemming back to when the agency was referred to as The Hincks-Dellcrest Centre and even prior. Because of this decades-long pride in student teaching and training, SickKids CCMH tends to attract staff who are highly invested in prioritizing the development and supervision of new and upcoming clinicians. Psychology staff at SickKids CCMH are especially proud of assessment, intervention, and training we do, and we encourage you to explore this brochure carefully and with curiosity. For those of you who attend an interview for an upcoming placement, we will look forward to learning more about you, responding to your questions, and sharing our pride in what we do.

For your information, the internship program at SickKids CCMH is a member of the *Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers* (APPIC). We are also members of the

*Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs (CCPPP)*. The psychology training program is managed by a doctoral staff psychologist as Director of Training. The internship is not CPA accredited; however, we have submitted our self-study to the *Canadian Psychological Association* for their consideration and we hope to be accredited within the next year or so.

**Please note:** Although SickKids CCMH has several settings and offers several types of assessment and treatment services, these intervention placements are based within our Outpatient Services at our 440 Jarvis St. site in downtown Toronto (Jarvis & Wellesley)

# Available practicum placements



Three to four **intervention practicum** placements in clinical child psychology generally are available each year to doctoral level graduate students. These placements are offered at our Jarvis site (Yonge and Wellesley area). Although SickKids CCMH has several settings and offers several types of prevention and treatment services as mentioned above (e.g., residential, day treatment), all intervention practicum placements are based within Outpatient Services. Practicum placement positions generally are 11 months, 2 to 2.5 day a week<sup>1</sup> beginning on the first Wednesday after Labour Day and ending on the last working day of July the following year. This totals approximately 500 to 600 hours of onsite time.

Practicum students are provided with a common room/shared space at their designated site. Practicum students may be involved in some infrequent travel to and the provision of services at one or more of the centre's other locations in the city.

If you are interested in our **assessment practicum** experience, please, see our separate brochure for that program.

## Impact of COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 on the 2021-2022 training cycle is unknown at this time. Please, be advised that some of the descriptions in this brochure may be impacted by COVID-19 disruptions and restrictions within SickKids CCMH. At the time of writing this brochure, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted some of the training opportunities we are able to provide to our current trainees. However, we have adjusted their experiences in order to meet their training goals to the best of our ability. From mid-March to July 2020, training experiences have taken place remotely through videoconferencing technology. This includes virtual: clinical assessment, individual and family psychotherapy, some play therapy, parent counseling, interviewing, supervision, didactics and seminars, psychology team meetings, and grand rounds.

Described below is the intended program structure and experiences, which may require modification depending on limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Should adjustments be required, potential and actual trainees will be notified as soon as information becomes available. Our program has thus far navigated the uncertain landscape with flexibility and creativity, and we will continue to honour our commitment to achieve program competencies in the upcoming academic cycles as well. We cannot predict with any degree of certainty how the pandemic may impact future training cycles, but we can commit to being transparent with information, collaborating with trainees to develop disruption contingency plans guided by training goals, and to expressly document adjusted goals and expectations (including

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<sup>1</sup> Minimum 2 days; ½ day optional.

supervision arrangements). Should disruptions occur in the future, potential and actual trainees will be notified as soon as information becomes available. We are confident that we can continue to provide the necessary training experiences to allow our trainees to achieve program goals and competencies.

Practicum students are expected to comply with any and all federal, provincial, and SickKids CCMH organization regulations including but not limited to wearing PPE, maintaining appropriate physical distancing, abiding by travel restrictions, quarantining, and other Infection Prevention and Control procedures within the context of providing clinical services, or otherwise.

Please, see the Application Process section at the end of this brochure for more information about the impact of COVID-19 on training experience.

# Intervention practicum placement philosophy and objectives



The primary emphasis of the intervention practicum placement is on a developmental and theoretically integrated approach to the clinical assessment of children and families. In addition, an inter-professional approach is integral to the clinical practices of SickKids CCMH and provides practicum students with the opportunity to work with mental health professionals of different backgrounds and with a broad range of interests, knowledge, and skills.

## Training goals:

1. Develop skills in clinical assessment, diagnosis, and formulation that focus on underlying developmental, psychodynamic, biological, family, and system factors that produce vulnerability to specific symptom formation in children.
2. Develop skills in establishing therapeutic rapport, in cultural competence, and in the ability to communicate assessment and diagnostic information clearly and sensitively to clients.
3. Develop skills in the selection and implementation of appropriate psychotherapeutic interventions with children and their families, integrating elements of theory and practice from contemporary relational psychoanalysis, cognitive science, cognitive behavior therapy, and dynamic systems theory.
4. Expand respect for and critical thought regarding research in the area of children's mental health.
5. Develop the skills needed to work collaboratively in an interprofessional and organizational service-delivery environment, including an understanding of and respect for the contributions of the various disciplines to children's mental health.
6. Develop skills in applying relevant ethical, legal, and professional standards in their clinical work.

# The intervention practicum placement experience



The intervention practicum placement is designed to provide students with the opportunity to become familiar with a broad bio-psychosocial, multi-systemic orientation, utilizing a variety of interventions (e.g., individual therapy, play therapy, family therapy, parent counselling), in accordance with client needs and the training objectives of the student.

This is accomplished through direct service activities with Outpatient clients (which includes membership on an interprofessional direct service training team), seminars, and/or both individual and group supervision each described below. A sample weekly schedule can be found in *Appendix A*.

The placement is comprised of four main components that generally run from September to July of the next year. Each practicum trainee will undertake each of the following components:

- provision of direct clinical assessment and intervention service activities to their case load of clients
- membership on one interprofessional direct service training team
- participation in educational seminars
- both individual and group supervision

## Client contact

A minimum of four hours of face-to-face client contact (in individual, family, and/or group therapy) is expected each week **plus** weekly participation on one of the interprofessional assessment teams. The nature of the contact at the beginning of the practicum placement depends on the background and previous experience of the student. In the first two months, students may receive a high degree of live supervision, and seminars and supervision focus on rapport building with clients and on clinical assessment skills. Clients seen are primarily from outpatient services, however, trainees may have an opportunity to see children and youth from our city or rural residential program as well.

## Interprofessional training teams

Some of SickKids CCMH's services are delivered through specialized interprofessional teams that accept psychology practicum students and other trainees as members. In consultation with their supervisor, and as consistent with their individualized training goals, students choose one interprofessional training team - typically one of: Child & Adolescent Assessment Team – Jarvis (CAAT-J) or one of two Infant & Preschool Assessment and Treatment Teams.

## Seminars

All psychology practicum students are required to participate in one to two weekly seminars. In consultation with their supervisor, and as consistent with their individualized training goals, students typically choose from the following seminars: Individual psychotherapy with children; Family therapy; Assessment and treatment with very young children.

## Supervision and performance evaluation

Supervision is provided in both individual (a minimum of two hours per week) and small group format. Throughout their practicum placement, students are assigned two supervisors who are registered psychologists. These psychologists guide their practicum experience and meet weekly with the student. Due to the broad range of clinical training teams and experience opportunities available, practicum students also might receive team-specific supervision from members of other disciplines (e.g., psychiatry, social work). All of the student's work, however, is discussed with and monitored by the student's psychologist supervisors, with ongoing feedback throughout the year. In consultation with others involved in the student's work, formal performance evaluations are completed by the supervisor at the end of January/early February and at the end of July each year, using the relevant university's evaluation form and/or the centre's "Competency Assessment" form. Both evaluations are filed in the practicum student's personnel record. The student's psychologist supervisor provides the link between the centre and the student's university, ensuring that specific university practicum placement expectations are met with regard to training objectives, experience, supervision, and performance evaluation. All practicum students are asked to complete the centre's "Student/Trainee Exit Interview" upon completion of their placement.

## Policies and procedures

SickKids CCMH's *Policies and Operational Procedures* apply to all personnel associated with SickKids CCMH, including psychology practicum students. As part of the contracting process, practicum students receive access to, and are required to sign an acknowledgment of having read, the following SickKids CCMH policies: Personnel Code of Ethics; Privacy and Confidentiality; and Use of Technology. Advance copies of these policies will be provided on request. Practicum students receive orientation regarding all centre policies and operational procedures at the beginning of their placement, and ongoing supervision with regard to their implementation. In particular, practicum students are helped to familiarize themselves with the centre's clinical policies/operational procedures (e.g., Client Privacy and Confidentiality, Client Records, Behaviour Management), and with the centre's human resources policies/operational procedures (e.g., Personnel Code of Ethics, Workplace Harassment Prevention, Use of Technology Infection Prevention and Control). **All trainees are required to have a vulnerable-sector police check completed to the satisfaction of SickKids CCMH prior to the beginning of their placement.**

## Complaints and performance concerns

Responses to practicum students' concerns about their supervisor or about their practicum experience, and supervisors' concerns about psychology student performance, are guided by the principles of fairness, transparency, and due process, and by the following SickKids CCMH policies and procedures: Supervision, Performance Management, Conflict Resolution, and Disciplinary Action.

In addition, the centre has specific procedures for psychology trainees: Due Process Procedures and Trainee Grievance Procedures which are distributed during the first week of orientation and available upon request. The centre also familiarizes itself with and respects the specific requirements of students' universities with regard to dealing with such matters, including involvement of the university's practicum field supervisor/training director when warranted.

# Application qualifications and process



Applicants must currently be enrolled in a PhD-track CPA-accredited university applied psychology program. In addition, applicants are expected to have completed coursework in child development and in psychological assessment and psychopathology in infants, children, youth, and families.

Applicants should have considerable interest in a rigorous, theoretically integrated, and developmental approach to assessment and treatment of children and families, as this is the predominant orientation of SickKids CCMH.

## Interested applicants must submit the following:

1. A PDF document containing a cover letter and CV to the e-mail below. The cover letter should contain the following information:
  - a. Brief description of your training and skills
  - b. Reason for applying to SickKids CCMH
  - c. Training goals
2. Two letters of reference, preferably from psychologists familiar with their clinical work (to be mailed or e-mailed with original signatures)
3. The *University Authorization Form (Appendix B)* signed by their University's Coordinator of Practicum Placement Training
4. The completed application form (*Appendix C*)

**Please note:** Do NOT submit university course transcripts.

We will attempt to acknowledge all applications by e-mail.

**Once accepted for a placement position, all trainees are required to have vulnerable-sector police check satisfactory to SickKids CCMH completed prior to the beginning of their placement.**

**Please direct application to Dr. Susan Yabsley at [syabsley@sickkidscmh.ca](mailto:syabsley@sickkidscmh.ca)**

Susan Yabsley, PhD, C. Psych.  
Psychology Training Leader  
SickKids Centre for Community Mental Health  
440 Jarvis Street  
Toronto ON M4Y 2H4

**General inquiries should be directed to:**

Suventhini Thamothersampillai  
Educational Coordinator  
SickKids Centre for Community Mental Health  
416-924-1164 ext.4243  
[sthamotharampillai@sickkidscmh.ca](mailto:sthamotharampillai@sickkidscmh.ca)

**Practicum placement applications should be submitted by Feb.1;** that is, eight months prior to when the practicum placement would begin (i.e., the first working day in September of the same year). Interviews, when indicated, will be scheduled in February and/or March.

## Selection process

Two to three staff members, PhD-level psychologists, review the application of each candidate. Candidates are invited to attend a group interview. Each interview group will consist of four or five applicants and two or three staff psychologists who, typically, will be the successful candidates' supervising psychologists. Our interviews are scheduled in February and/or March.

SickKids CCMH follows the **Greater Toronto Area Common Notification Day**. Check with your DCTs for that date each year. Offers of a practicum placement made on the GTA Common Notification Day will be made by email and/or telephone and the director of clinical training of the trainee's program will be copied on the email.

# Psychology personnel



The following psychologists may be assigned to provide direct supervision to one or more psychology practicum students each year. We look forward to working with you.

**Susan Yabsley**, PhD, C. Psych. (University College, London; Anna Freud Centre). Director, Specialized Services & Interprofessional Practice; Psychology Training Leader; Psychology Intern and Practicum Supervisor

**Dina Lafoyiannis**, PhD, C. Psych. (York University). Psychologist, Outpatient Services; Psychology Intern and Practicum Supervisor

**Lorne Sugar**, PhD, C. Psych. (York University). Psychologist, Outpatient Services; Psychology Intern and Practicum Supervisor

**Leah Litwin**, PhD, .Psych. (Supervised Practice). (York University). Psychologist (Supervised Practice), Intensive Services for Youth and Outpatient Services; Psychology Practicum Supervisor

**Elyse Reim**, PhD, C. Psych. (Guelph University). Psychologist, In-Home & Day Treatment and Outpatient Services; Practicum Supervisor.

# Appendix A: Sample weekly schedule for Psychology Practicum Students

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9 – 10 a.m.			<b>Direct Service –</b>  Child & Adolescent Assessment Team-Jarvis (CAAT-J)	<b>Optional Half-day</b>  <b>Indirect service</b> – report writing	<b>Seminar –</b> Integrative Individual Psychotherapy (8:45 – 10:15 a.m.)
10 – 11 a.m.				<b>Seminar –</b>  (10:30 a.m. – noon)	<b>Indirect service –</b> Internal case conference, chart review
11 a.m. – noon					<b>Indirect service –</b> report writing
Noon – 1 p.m.			<b>Lunch break</b>		<b>Rounds</b>
1 – 2 p.m.			<b>Indirect service –</b> report/note writing		<b>Indirect service –</b> Preparation for supervision (e.g., review process notes)
2 – 3 p.m.			<b>Indirect service –</b> Reading or writing reports for Latency Age team		<b>Indirect service –</b> report/note writing
3 – 4 p.m.			<b>Individual supervision</b>		<b>Individual Supervision</b>
4 – 5 p.m.			<b>Direct service –</b> Family therapy		<b>Direct service –</b> Individual parent counseling
5 – 6 p.m.					<b>Direct service –</b> Individual therapy
6 – 7 p.m.			<b>Direct service –</b> Individual play therapy		

# Appendix B: University authorization form



I, \_\_\_\_\_

(Print name of University Director of Practicum Training)

at \_\_\_\_\_

(Print name of university)

have discussed and approve the application of:

\_\_\_\_\_

(Print name of graduate student in Psychology)

for an intervention practicum placement to begin next September at SickKids Centre for Community Mental Health.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature of University Director of Practicum Training)

This form should be included with the other required application materials sent by the practicum placement applicant to: Dr. Susan Yabsley, Psychology Training Leader, SickKids Centre for Community Mental Health, 440 Jarvis Street, Toronto, ON, M4Y 2H4 Canada

# Appendix C: Psychology intervention practicum placement application form



Applications due on or before: February 1

## A. General information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Citizenship status: \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Education background

University	Dates of attendance	Major	Degree granted/ Expected date of completion
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**C.** Additional training, practicum placements; please, list and describe

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D. Director of Clinical Training at your institution

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

University/Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note:** Applications are due on or before **01 February**. Offers of a practicum placement will be made on the **Greater Toronto Area Common Notification Day** by e-mail and/or telephone. Check with your Director of Clinical Training for the date each year (typically mid-March). **The Director of Clinical Training at your institution will be cc'd on the e-mail offer so, please, ensure the above information is included and correct.**

This form should be included with the other required application materials sent by the practicum placement applicant to:

Dr. Susan Yabsley, Psychology Training Leader, SickKids Centre for Community Mental Health, 440 Jarvis Street, Toronto, ON, M4Y 2H4, Canada.