



Family, School and Community Partnerships
Leading to Successful Learning

PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC EXTERNSHIP/PRACTICUM PROGRAM

Revised: August, 2011

This program is recognized as a Member of ACEPT.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Connection's Day School (CDS) is a private therapeutic day school, founded in 1998. We serve children and adolescents, ages 8-21, primarily from Lake County who, because of significant special education needs (Emotional, Behavioral & Learning Disabilities), require an alternative school program that is both educational and therapeutic. CDS utilizes educational, therapeutic, family and community connections to promote academic achievement, social/emotional well-being and personal growth. The Staff Members at CDS employ a variety of methods to help students make academic progress, and develop and/or improve their coping and social skills. By utilizing a combination of respect, humor, empathy, and kindness balanced with firmness (i.e., maintaining high expectations and ensuring that students adhere to rules, boundaries and limitations), Staff Members are able to establish and maintain supportive, nurturing relationships with our students. In turn, these relationships can help the students be more open to learning the life skills required for long-term success.

The students engage in an academically challenging curriculum emphasizing group instruction and hands-on activities. With regard to treatment philosophies, the Clinical Staff at CDS use a cognitive-behavioral/problem-solving approach as well as psychodynamic, family-systems and narrative principles. In addition, the Lakota-Sioux Circle of Courage (teaching the value of belonging, independence, generosity and mastery) is also utilized. This multi-faceted approach works to assist the students in: overcoming issues at hand; practicing more successful behavioral alternatives; and exploring ways to "re-write" their frequently negative life stories. The goal is to work with students to build on their strengths and gifts, and be allies with them in their "fight" against the challenges and obstacles that get in the way of their success. The environment is based on a positive, nurturing model, where natural consequences for behaviors are frequently utilized. CDS avoids using restrictive and/or punitive methods of behavioral management and does not have a time-out room. Therapeutic holding (restraint) is only employed as a last resort, when the child is determined to be a danger to him/herself or others.

Ms. Betty Lindquist and Dr. John Schuler, founders of the program, chose to base the mission of CDS on philosophical principles similar to those held at Counseling Connection - their multi-disciplinary group practice which specializes in the therapeutic needs of children, adolescents and families. The professionals at Counseling Connection have worked closely with the schools, courts and social service agencies of Lake and Northern Cook Counties since 1983.

Connection's Day School

31410 North US Highway 45 | Libertyville, IL 60048 | Phone: (847) 680-8349 | Fax: (847) 680-8583

II. TRAINING PROGRAM, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Clinical Training Program at Connection's Day School is quite extensive - offering two Post-Doctoral Fellowship (APPIC), two Pre-Doctoral Internship (APPIC) and four Psychotherapeutic Externship/Practicum positions.

The Psychotherapeutic Externship program has been designed to help Externs acquire and refine their clinical skills in key areas of practice, all while functioning as a valued member of a Multidisciplinary Team. There is an emphasis on training in fundamental clinical skills with a primary focus on Individual, Group and Family Therapy, and Crisis Intervention. The training program is organized in such a way that it is designed to provide Interns with a planned, programmed sequence of training experiences, one which assures breadth and quality of training.

Externs are provided with opportunities to work with high-risk children, adolescents and their families – individuals struggling with mild to severe: mood, anxiety, behavior, substance-related, psychotic, developmental, and personality disorders. Externs also get an opportunity to work with people of all ages, and diverse cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. All of this is done under the careful supervision of the Clinical Director, and other members of the Clinical Training Staff.

Ultimately, the main training goal/objective is to promote the Extern's professional growth in such a way that, by the end of the training year, s/he feels confident in his/her ability to competently function as a Clinician, with the ability to practice in accordance with the highest standards of care.

III. CLINICAL WORK, SUPERVISION AND TRAINING

- Individual, Group, & Family Therapy, and Crisis Intervention with children, adolescents and their parents/guardians. Co-leading "Specialty Groups" with experienced staff group leaders (art therapy, music therapy, drug & alcohol education and personal management).
- Assisting with the facilitation of Monthly Parents' Support Group meetings.
- Attending Multidisciplinary Staffings for students; and writing and presenting Treatment Summaries, and occasionally Social Developmental Histories, for these Staffings.
- One hour of Individual, and one hour of Group Supervision per week with a Licensed Clinical Psychologists, and opportunities to consult, as needed, with other members of the Clinical Training Staff. The primary focus of this supervision is to explore and develop the psychological services rendered directly by the Extern, as well supporting their professional development.
- Monthly consultation meetings with the Medical Director/Consulting Psychiatrist for CDS.
- Daily Staff Meetings – from 3:30-4:00pm, to discuss the day's events, problem-solve and develop plans for the future.
- Institute Days – in-school staff training which covers school-related, community, therapeutic and behavioral topics and interventions.
- An opportunity to learn about Animal Assisted Therapy by training with our in-house Therapy Dogs International representative, and working with our Staff Therapy Dogs, "Ripley", "Ozzie", "Deogi", "Lucy" & "Lola" within individual and group therapy.

TRAINING NOTE: Although our Psychotherapeutic Externs do not conduct any psychological testing, when one of the students on their caseload requires testing, they work collaboratively with the Psychodiagnostic Externs from Counseling Connection who conduct the testing. These Diagnostic Externs (and their Supervisors) are the only individuals who provide formal psychological testing for Connection's Day School students.

IV. EXTERNSHIP FORMAT

- 11 consecutive months ~ mid-August – late-July.
- 3 days per week (24 hours). Some modifications can be made to this format depending upon the Extern's course schedule (e.g., an Extern can be on site for 2 full-days and 2 half-days).
- Thursday is the one day that ALL Externs are required to be on-site.
- Externs are required to participate in a minimum of 600 hours of Supervised Clinical Experience throughout the year, this time is spent in: Direct Service; Indirect Service; Training; and Supervision.
- Traditionally, the Externship program will begin at the start of the academic year (mid-August), however, alternate start dates may be required.

V. EVALUATION

Evaluation is an active, ongoing process throughout the Externship period. All evaluations that an Extern's academic program requires will be completed by her/his Primary Supervisor. In addition, the Supervisor and Extern will have an active discussion of the evaluation itself, and the Extern's areas of strength and weakness (this type of discussion will occur at least 2 times throughout the course of the training year). Any serious concerns will be discussed with the Extern, the other members of the Clinical Training Staff, and the Director of Training at the Extern's academic program. All Externs will receive a copy of the document: *Due Process Procedures*, for a full explanation of these policies, at the beginning of their training/orientation.

VI. EXTERNSHIP BENEFITS

- Vacation Time ~ Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring and Summer Breaks, all National Holidays and a modified Summer Schedule (3 days per week, for the last 7 weeks of the Externship).
- 10 Sick Days and 1 Personal Day for the year.
- No pager or on-call duties.
- Free organic lunch available daily.

VII. CLINICAL STAFF

As a Connection's Day School Extern, you will be a member of a dynamic Clinical Team:

Kristen Mittl Pollina, Psy.D.

Illinois School of Professional Psychology

Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Clinical Director / Director of Clinical Training / Primary Supervisor

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Ruth M. Tompkins, Psy.D.
Illinois School of Professional Psychology
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Diagnostic/IAES Program Coordinator / Primary Supervisor

John L. Schuler, Psy.D.
Illinois School of Professional Psychology
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Founder / Administrator / Auxiliary Supervisor

Sol Rappaport, Ph.D.
DePaul University
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Psychodiagnostician / Auxiliary Supervisor

Michael Greenbaum, M.D.
University of Illinois
Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist / Medical Director

Christina Bailey, Psy.D.
Illinois School of Professional Psychology
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Psychodiagnostician / Consultant

Charlotte Edwards, Psy.D.
Illinois School of Professional Psychology
Licensed Clinical Psychologist / Consultant

Cherie Lusky, M.S., ATR, LCPC
Mount Mary College
Registered Art Therapist / Art Therapy Group Leader

Diana McNelis, M.A., LCPC, CADC
Loyola University
Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor / Substance Abuse Education Group Leader

MaryPat Henders, M.A.A.T., LCPC
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor / Personal Management Group Leader

Larisa Liekys, B.A.
University of Wisconsin
Music Appreciation Group Leader

Laura Grimes, M.Ed.
National-Louis University
Chosen Stars Adoption Group Leader

Crystal Hall, B.S., OTR/L
Concordia University
Occupational Therapist

Joanne Wagner, M.A., CCC/SLP
Northwestern University
Speech & Language Pathologist

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Felicia Acton, Psy.D.
Argosy University
Post-Doctoral Fellow

Allison Mauro, Psy.D.
Midwestern University
Post-Doctoral Fellow

Melissa Cinquegrani, M.A. (Psy.D. Candidate)
Midwestern University
Pre-Doctoral Intern

Erin Sheffer, M.A. (Psy.D. Candidate)
Argosy University
Pre-Doctoral Intern

Christine Billick, B.A. (Psy.D. Candidate)
Midwestern University
Advanced Psychotherapeutic Extern

Shyma El Sayed, B.A. (Psy.D. Candidate)
Chicago School of Professional Psychology
Psychotherapeutic Extern

Kelly Somplolski, M.A.C. (Psy.D. Candidate)
Adler School of Professional Psychology
Psychotherapeutic Extern

Giovanna Vitullo, M.A. (Psy.D. Candidate)
Argosy University
Psychotherapeutic Extern

Please note, at each level of training, CDS trainees have clearly and consistently designated titles: Post-Doctoral Fellowship = “Fellow” or “Post-Doc”, Pre-Doctoral Internship = “Intern” and Psychotherapeutic Externship = “Extern”. Additionally, all school staff members are referred to by their formal title (Ms., Mr. and Dr.) to support a climate of respect and more clearly establish boundaries between students and staff.

VIII. APPLICATION PROCESS

Doctoral and Master’s level students, from Clinical and Counseling Psychology training programs, who have met all the requirements of their program for application for Externship/Practicum, must submit the following materials **within one week of the ACEPT-identified date that students may begin submitting applications** (e.g., if students can begin submitting applications on the second Friday in February, they are due to CDS by the third Friday in February) prior to their Externship year:

- Cover Letter outlining professional goals and interests, and how this Externship site meets those criteria
- Curriculum Vitae
- Three Letters of Recommendation
- Writing Sample (*Note: a Case Formulation, Treatment Summary, etc. is preferred. However, if you do not have a sample that would fit in this category, please send a Psychodiagnostic Report.*)
- All Graduate School Transcripts

This information must be forwarded by mail to:

Kristen Mittl Pollina, Psy.D.
Clinical Director & Director of Clinical Training
Connection's Day School
31410 North US Highway 45
Libertyville, IL 60048

APPLICATION NOTES

Given the large volume of applications we receive, please help simplify our process by following the guidelines below:

- Do not send any application materials under separate cover – all materials should be contained within the same envelope.
- Make sure there are no documents in separate envelopes – if you need to, feel free to open envelopes for letters of recommendation, transcripts, etc..
- Staple all documents that are 2 pages or more.
- Organize all documents in the order indicated above (cover letter, vitae, 3 letters of recommendation, writing sample, transcript).

Thank You!

If you have any further questions, please contact Dr. Pollina at:

E-Mail: kpollina@connectionsdayschool.net

Phone: (847) 680-8349 ~ Ext. 319

Connection's Day School abides by the ACEPT policies that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept or use any ranking-related information from any Externship applicant; and that no offers will be made to applicants prior to 9:00am on the ACEPT-identified Notification Day.