

Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Pediatric Health Psychology

2021-2022



Department of Psychology
The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, ON, Canada

Pediatric Psychology Fellowship Coordinator: Joel Tourigny, Ph.D., C.Psych
Director of Training: Sharon Guger, Ph.D., C.Psych

SickKids[®]

Overview

The Department of Psychology at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Ontario offers two Post-Doctoral Pediatric Health Psychology Fellowships. As one of the fastest growing sub-specialties in psychology today, pediatric psychology offers clinicians the opportunity to work in partnership with a wide range of professionals to enhance children's health and well-being at the intersection of mind and body. These are 1.0 FTE positions, primarily involving direct clinical service to the children, youth, and families served by the hospital. These one-year training positions begin on September 1, 2021, although this date is negotiable within a week if necessary.

Our program is a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and complies with the uniform notification date for applicants. The fellowship adheres to a scientist-practitioner model and training is intended to prepare fellows for registration with the College of Psychologists of Ontario (CPO) and sub-specialty practice in the area of pediatric health psychology.

The philosophy of the fellowship mirrors that of The Hospital for Sick Children in that the needs of the patient and family are primary. An evidence-based/best practice approach is used and fellows work closely with various members of the multi-disciplinary team. Conceptualizing the child's medical, psychological, social, emotional, and spiritual needs within a developmental framework is integral to practice.

The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), affiliated with the University of Toronto, is Canada's largest pediatric academic health care institution and one of the world's leading children's hospitals. As innovators in child health, SickKids improves the health of children by integrating care, research and teaching. It is a centre of excellence in the delivery of cutting edge health care to the pediatric population, and is supported by Canada's strongest hospital-based Research Institute.

The Department of Psychology at SickKids exists as an independent department within a Child Health Services cluster model of service provision, and includes approximately 30 psychologists, 10 psychometrists, and numerous research staff and trainees providing services and conducting clinical research within the hospital. In addition to specialty training in Pediatric Psychology, the Department offers clinical training at the post-doctoral level in Pediatric Neuropsychology (2 positions), internship level (3 positions, accredited by the Canadian Psychological Association), and graduate practicum level. Several programs within the hospital secure independent grants for clinical and/or research fellows from year to year which enriches the collegial atmosphere amongst trainees at all levels.

COVID-19 Impact on Training

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the training program and faculty have navigated the uncertain landscape with flexibility prioritizing clinical care, training and safety. Responses to the global pandemic continue to evolve and, at the time of writing this brochure, a hybrid model of care (combination of in-hospital and virtual) is being provided. It is unclear the degree to which similar arrangements will be in place for the 2021-2022 training year.

At the time of writing, ambulatory (out-patient) clinical services are not operating at full capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has impacted the nature of training opportunities available to current residents and fellows, and their experiences were adjusted to meet training goals to the best of our ability. From mid-March until July 2020, all training took place remotely through secure videoconferencing technology. Activities included outpatient individual and group intervention, assessment, interviewing/feedbacks, research consultation, supervision, team meetings, didactic seminars and case presentations. As of July 2020, some face-to-face training has been available with patient, staff and trainee safety being paramount.

Current residents and fellows were also involved in hospital initiatives specific to the provision of care and support during the pandemic. These included:

- **Virtual Workshop for caregivers:** Emotion Regulation & Resiliency. The workshops provide space for caregiver self-care and compassion using mindfulness skills of emotional coaching of children/teens dealing with stressors
- **Virtual COVID-19 Brief Therapy Clinic** for patients & families. This clinic provides brief therapy treatment services, and resource counselling to patients and families.
- **Development of online resources for caregivers:**
<https://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/covid-19>

The SickKids Post-doctoral Fellowship in Pediatric Psychology is committed to the training of future health psychologists, and high quality training experiences remain the priority. This brochure describes the intended program structure and rotation experiences, which may require modification depending on limitations imposed by COVID-19. While the program cannot predict with any degree of certainty how the pandemic may impact future training cycles, faculty and departmental leadership are committed to being transparent with information, collaborating with residents and fellows to develop disruption contingency plans guided by training goals, and to document adjusted goals and expectations (including supervision arrangements). Should disruptions to rotations occur in the future, potential and current fellows will be notified as soon as information becomes available.

Fellows are expected to comply with any and all federal, provincial, and Sick Kids organization regulations including but not limited to wearing Personal Protective Equipment, 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.

Goals of the Fellowship

The goal of our program is to prepare fellows for independent specialty practice in pediatric health psychology. Fellows are exposed to a wide range of patient populations in both inpatient and outpatient settings. Each fellow will select major and minor rotations in accordance with their interest and with the guidance of the fellowship coordinator. Fellows will also choose from various 'exposures' to broaden their training experience. A primary goal of the fellowship is to develop a working model of psychological assessment, consultation, and intervention that allows for effective, thorough, yet efficient service delivery in the fast paced and complex setting of an academic health sciences centre. Complementary goals of the fellowship include obtaining registration as a psychologist with the CPO, becoming adept at working within a multi-disciplinary team, and developing sub-specialty expertise through depth rotations in specific areas such as pain, obesity management, or eating disorders. Graduates of our program have entered into positions in academic medical centers, private practice and multi-disciplinary community clinics.

Training Activities

The fellowship offers clinical training in outpatient and inpatient psychological assessment, consultation, and intervention for children, youth, and families. Children and families served come from a wide range of pediatric medical clinics with the full-spectrum of medical, psychological, and social issues.

Upon completion of the fellowship, graduates will have developed specialty expertise in pediatric health psychology. They will be well versed in consulting with medical teams and educating team members on how health psychology can positively impact children's lives. They will be practiced in the art of conducting assessments and consultations in the hospital setting and providing effective direction to medical teams where appropriate. Graduating fellows will have had opportunities to develop a broad intervention skill set including individual, group, and/or family therapy skills.

They will have developed expertise in a variety of health psychology interventions, including:

- prevention of disease and injury,
- enhancing coping and adaptation to illness,
- improving adherence to treatment regimens,
- treating mental health disorders related to physical well-being,
- balancing family systems that have been disrupted by an illness or its treatment,
- harmonizing sleep, eating, and elimination irregularities,
- stress, pain, and symptom management, and
- treating somatic and conversion disorders.

Rotations

Fellows have opportunities for pediatric health and clinical psychology training in a range of programs and clinics. Rotations are selected based upon fellows' interests, availability of supervisors, and the goals of providing a range of clinical experiences including both depth and breadth, inpatient and outpatient contacts, and small and large clinics serving a varied patient population. Fellows will select one major rotation from the following four large clinics which will fill approximately 2 days per week of their time for the full year:

Eating Disorders Program

The Eating Disorders Program at SickKids diagnoses and treats children and adolescents with a range of eating disorders. They are the primary treatment site for the central Toronto area and are a specialty centre for the province of Ontario. The program has an interdisciplinary approach to treatment, and believes family involvement is crucial for recovery from an eating disorder. For more information on the Eating Disorders Program, please visit: <http://www.sickkids.ca/AdolescentMedicine/What-We-Do/Programs/Eating%20Disorders%20Program/>.

The Eating Disorders program includes:

- Eating Disorders Inpatient Program
- Eating Disorders Outpatient Program
- Eating Disorders Day Hospital
- Family Education

Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Program (SCAN)

The Suspected Child Abuse & Neglect (SCAN) program at Sickkids provides medical and psychosocial intervention for children, youth and their caregivers. The program is multidisciplinary and services 400-500 children/youth per year who have experienced physical abuse, sexual abuse/assault, neglect and/or emotional abuse. In addition, we offer specialized psychosocial services for children and youth who have experienced Internet sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. The program has expertise in complex trauma and is seen as a leader in the field. Clinicians engage in training, research and leadership activities.

Sick Kids Team Obesity Management Program (STOMP)

STOMP is a Weight Management Program focusing on healthy living. For an in-depth view of the STOMP program, visit: <http://www.sickkids.ca/STOMP/>. STOMP's multidisciplinary team assesses approximately 50 new patients annually. Its program offerings include:

- Teen Program: for teenagers with complex obesity aged 12 to 17.5 years.
- Early Years Program: for children living in the GTA aged six months to five years.
- Day Treatment Program: this new initiative is temporarily funded by an internal grant and explores the benefits of providing intensive day-treatment at SickKids.

Chronic Pain Program

The Chronic Pain Clinic at The Hospital for Sick Children is a specialized service for the assessment and treatment of children and adolescents with chronic pain. It is made up of an experienced team of anaesthesiologists, advanced practice nurses, two psychologists, a psychiatrist and physiotherapists. They provide family-centred care and offer treatments and therapies based on the best evidence. For more information, visit: <https://www.sickkids.ca/Anesthesia/Chronic-Pain-Clinic/>. The Chronic Pain Program engages in:

- Multidisciplinary consults,
- Individual assessment and treatment,
- Group treatment programs.

To broaden their pediatric psychology expertise fellows will select 2 minor rotations from the following list of clinics with embedded pediatric psychologists. Time commitments will vary, but usually a minor rotation will require 1 day per week for the full year or 2 days per week for half of the year. Options for minor rotations include:

- Diabetes Clinic
- Oncology Clinics
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease Clinic
- Inpatient pediatrics, Cystic Fibrosis, and Sickle Cell clinics,
- Transplant and Regenerative Medicine
- A program of research, likely within one of the major or minor rotations listed above, but could include other clinics within the hospital

Opportunities for training within the hospital are numerous and exciting. Fellows are often excited about the chance to participate in an interesting clinic or learn from experienced staff. To allow fellows the chance to explore some of these opportunities, fellows may opt to engage in some exposure experiences. Exposures are less time intensive than minor rotations, and are intended to offer the fellow some familiarity with a given clinic, an improved understanding of an issue within pediatrics, or provide some training in a given assessment or therapeutic modality. Exposure opportunities vary from year to year, but could include:

- A more narrow exposure to one of the rotations listed above,
- Participation in a group intervention in a given clinic such as a mindfulness group or a parent education group,
- Engagement in the Family Therapy Training Program run by social work staff in the Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry Program
- Working in the Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry Program serving inpatients and/or outpatients

Supervision

Supervision is provided by senior staff in the Department of Psychology and involves observation, report review, and one-to-one supervision. Fellows will receive at least two hours of individual face-to-face supervision per week. Regularly scheduled, one-to-one supervision will include setting and monitoring of training goals, review of clinical cases, and issues related to professional development. Supervision follows a developmental model and fellows will work with a variety of faculty members throughout the fellowship for broad exposure to different styles of clinical practice and supervision. Regular meetings with the Fellowship Coordinator will also provide an opportunity to review the fellow's progress towards their training goals and ensure that their fellowship experience is meeting SickKids' high standards for training and clinical practice. Fellows often have the opportunity to supervise pre-doctoral interns and practicum students within their major rotation, and will receive supervision on the training they provide.

Didactics

A rich array of didactic learning opportunities are available to fellows, interns, and staff at SickKids. Rotation-specific readings will be suggested by individual supervisors. More formal didactics are provided to ensure a broad knowledge-base in pediatric psychology. Once per month a full day of didactic training is offered to interns and fellows, with staff invited to selected sessions during the day. Fellows are expected to attend all of the health psychology offerings on these training days, while attendance at the neuropsychology offerings is optional. In addition to this full day of education, other optional didactic opportunities exist within the psychology department and the hospital as a whole.

Monthly Educational Curriculum:

- Professional Practice Seminar
- Clinical Didactic Seminar
- Directed Readings in Clinical Neuropsychology
- Health Psychology Seminar
- Clinical Case Consultation Group

Additional Didactic Opportunities:

- Psychology Department Rounds (monthly)
- Bio-Ethics Rounds (monthly)
- Clinical Health Evaluative Science (CHES) Rounds (weekly)
- Brain and Behavior Cross-Talks (monthly)
- Neuroscience and Mental Health Symposia (SickKids Research Institute, monthly)
- Clinical and research rounds associated with individual rotations (e.g., Neurology, Eating Disorders, Hematology/Oncology, Palliative Care) Pediatric Mental Health Grand Rounds (weekly)

Scholarship & Research



The Hospital for Sick Children is an active and exciting research environment. The program in Neuroscience and Mental Health within the Research Institute and the Brain and Behavior Centre integrate state of the art clinical, education, and research initiatives. Research at SickKids ranges from characterizing the impact of various adverse insults on development, to understanding the core neurocognitive deficits associated with neurodevelopmental disorders or acquired brain damage, to clinical trials of cutting edge interventions such as mindfulness informed group therapy for chronic pain patients and peer to peer mentoring offered to cancer survivors via Skype. Fellows may opt to engage in a research project as one of their minor rotations.

Pediatric Health Psychology Fellows are required to demonstrate their knowledge, expertise, and scholarship by offering talks, didactics, and/or case presentations during their fellowship. These presentations may include provision of education on specialty topic areas to colleagues, presentations on broader topics of mental health to patients and families, and/or a review of research activities conducted while at SickKids.

Evaluation

Formal written progress evaluations are introduced early on in the supervision process as the supervisor and the fellow discuss relevant past experience and their joint pedagogical goals for the fellow in that rotation. Supervisors provide feedback on a regular basis, but do so formally at the mid-point and conclusion of the rotation. At these times the fellow and supervisor will review progress to date, discuss any changes that may be necessary to keep the fellow's learning on track, and identify areas of strength and relative challenge for the fellow. Fellows whose performance is not at an expected level of competence will be advised regarding the problem areas in their performance, and a specific plan to remediate those weaknesses will be developed.

Stipend and Benefits

The stipend for the 2021 -2022 year is \$42,000 plus a \$5000 stipend for a total of \$47,000. Fellows are eligible for the modified SickKids benefits package (health and dental), 3 weeks paid vacation, and 3 days professional development leave.

Fellows have individual office space, a computer with internet connection, a private phone line and access to electronic medical journals through the University of Toronto Library.

Eligibility

Applicants should be graduates of a CPA/APA accredited graduate program in Clinical Psychology and have completed a CPA/APA accredited pre-doctoral internship in clinical psychology. It is expected that applicants will have internship level training in pediatric psychology. All degree requirements must be completed before the fellowship start date. Applicants who have successfully defended their doctoral dissertation are preferred. It is expected that the applicant will meet the requirements for issuance of a Certificate for Supervised Practice and pursue registration with the College of Psychologists of Ontario during the fellowship year. Applicants who bring diversity to the program (e.g., fluency in French or experience with under-served populations) are especially encouraged to apply.

Applicants who have had placements and / or requirements that were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are encouraged to have their Director of Clinical Training highlight the nature of this impact in their application. If placements were cancelled or prematurely terminated, applicants are encouraged to describe the training and hours that were anticipated in their cover letter. Please be assured that those situations will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis. As well, telepsychology interaction (telephone or virtual video conference) is considered equivalent to face-to-face patient/client contact.

Application

To Apply:

Interested applicants should complete the APPIC Psychology Postdoctoral Application process by **January 4th, 2021**. This is an application portal used by most health psychology fellowships in North America, and may be found at: <https://www.appic.org/About-APPIC/Postdoctoral/APPA-Postdoc-Application-Information>.

The application requirements include:

- A letter of interest describing clinical training, teaching, and research/scholarly interests
- A curriculum vitae
- Three (3) letters of reference (preferably from two clinical supervisors and one academic/research mentor)
- Graduate transcripts listing courses, grades and degrees.

An offer will be made to the successful candidate in **late February, 2021**.

Contact:

Joel Tourigny, Ph.D., C.Psych.,
Hospital for Sick Children
555 University Avenue, Toronto, ON M5G 1X8
Tel: 416-813-7398 / Fax: 416-813-8839
joel.tourigny@sickkids.ca

Information about SickKids and Toronto

The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), affiliated with the University of Toronto, is recognized as one of the world's foremost pediatric health-care institutions. It is Canada's leading centre dedicated to advancing children's health through the integration of patient care, research and education. To learn about the SickKids Strategic Plan 2020-2025 "Unprecedented outcomes powered by Precision Child Health" please see: <https://2025.sickkids.ca/>

With a staff that includes professionals from all disciplines of health care and research, SickKids provides the best in complex and specialized care by creating scientific and clinical advancements, sharing knowledge and expertise and championing the development of an accessible, comprehensive and sustainable child health system. The Peter Gilgan Centre for Research and Learning is a hub where researchers and learners can congregate and share ideas to transform the current state of child health care since its 2013 opening.

SickKids is located in downtown Toronto, Canada's largest city. Toronto lies on the shore of Lake Ontario, the easternmost of the Great Lakes. Over 4 million people live in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Toronto is a clean, safe, cosmopolitan city with a wonderful network of parks, recreational, and cultural facilities. For more information: www.seetorontonow.com

