

# The Clinical Child and Pediatric Psychology Internship



An American Psychological Association  
Accredited Internship in  
Clinical Psychology

2020 - 2021 Program



A Children's Hospital Los Angeles internship  
Affiliated with University of Southern California  
University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities



# The Clinical Child and Pediatric Psychology Internship



## INTRODUCTION

**T**he Community Mental Health Program at Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) offers a comprehensive Clinical Child Pediatric Psychology Doctoral Internship Training Program. The internship is housed within an institution with a strong mandate and commitment to training health professionals. CHLA is a 317 bed, non-profit, private pediatric teaching, research and treatment facility affiliated with the University Of Southern California Keck School Of Medicine. Each year the hospital cares for over 15,000 inpatients and 340 outpatients from newborn to 21 years of age who are referred by families and professionals throughout California and the world. U.S. News & World Report's national survey of children's hospitals has again ranked Children's Hospital Los Angeles the top pediatric medical center in the Western United States, and #5 Children's Hospital in the U.S. CHLA is highly ranked in all ten pediatric subspecialties placing it at the forefront of child health care nationally and globally.

CHLA is located in the heart of a high density, low income, culturally diverse, inner city neighborhood and reflects the community it serves, with over 70% of patients representing ethnic minorities. The USC University Center for Excellence at Children's Hospital Los Angeles (USC/UCEDD), within which the internship program is housed, was founded in 1966 and has been a consistent presence within Los Angeles, the state of California and nationally.

This American Psychological Association (APA) accredited internship in clinical psychology offers two required placements and one specialty placement in a variety of departments and clinical services. The two required clinical placements represent generalist skills of a child-focused psychologist: Child/Family Therapy and Psychological Assessment. Each intern matches to one specialized placement focused on one CHLA area of specialty practice (Adolescent Medicine, Assessment Consultation & Evaluation, Early Childhood Mental Health, Pediatric Psychology, and Trauma Psychology).

The training program is designed to prepare doctoral candidates to assume the role of a practicing professional in both the private and public sectors of mental health care and psychology practice. Through didactic lectures and seminars, intensive supervision, and ample direct patient contact, interns receive comprehensive experience and quality psychology training which engages them in psychological assessment, treatment/ therapy,

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interdisciplinary consultation, and community involvement. The internship program provides training in the principles of psychology as applied to pediatric mental health disorders through supervised experiences in outpatient mental health clinics, community clinics and/or pediatric hospital units.

The CHLA doctoral internship joined the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) in 1997 and was originally accredited by the APA in 1999. The program received its current seven years of full accreditation by the APA in 2012. For information about the program's accreditation, please contact the office of Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation at the American Psychological Association

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The yearlong full-time doctoral child clinical and pediatric psychology internship begins July 1<sup>st</sup> and ends June 30<sup>th</sup>. The **application deadline for the 2020-2021 class is November 4, 2019**. APPIC internship application and MATCH procedures apply to the selection process of this program.

## PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The Clinical Child and Pediatric Psychology Internship Training Program is based upon the philosophy that basic psychological principles and procedures drawn from behavioral, cognitive, family systems, and developmental theories should be integrated in a family-centered manner for efficacious and ethical psychological care. This internship provides an opportunity to develop and/or refine basic professional skills in clinical child and pediatric psychology, and to develop an appreciation for the elements of professional development that result in a strong integrated professional identity.



The intern is presented with opportunities to apply the scientist-practitioner model of clinical practice. The intern will become an adept consumer of research by learning to critically evaluate articles relevant to treatment cases and examine carefully the empirical evidence for various assessment and research procedures that may be utilized in clinical work.

## PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The clinical child and pediatric psychology doctoral training program goals and objectives include the following:

- To provide a comprehensive training experience for doctoral level psychology students in an interdisciplinary setting that meets the qualifications of the American Psychological Association.
- To provide doctoral psychology interns with training in outpatient psychotherapy with children, adolescents and their families.
- To train doctoral psychology interns on how to complete comprehensive developmental, psychological and educational assessments within the pediatric population.
- To provide an atmosphere in which psychology interns are encouraged to develop individualized programs that meet their professional development needs and interests, and are within the standards and guidelines of the CHLA Psychology Internship Training Program.

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■ To provide full-time doctoral psychology interns with a yearlong specialty placement in pediatric, child or adolescent psychology. It is hoped that these placement experiences will assist the intern in developing an appreciation for the mental health and health care needs of a specialty population as well as an interest within a professional practice area leading to post-doctoral fellowship training.

## PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The pre-doctoral psychology internship offers a wide range of clinical training experiences that include three concurrent yearlong placements. These placements are within the following:

1. **Child/Family Therapy Program** (*35% of intern time*)  
Within the CHLA Community Mental Health Service
2. **Child/Family Assessment Program** (*30% of intern time*)  
Within the CHLA Community Mental Health Service
3. **Specialty Program** (*35% of intern time*) in one of the following specialty areas:
  - a. Pediatric Psychology
  - b. Early Childhood
  - c. Assessment Consultation and Evaluation
  - d. Project HEAL Trauma Psychology
  - e. Adolescent Medicine

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## DESCRIPTIONS OF THE THREE CONCURRENT PLACEMENTS

The three yearlong concurrent placements leading to the development of professional competency have been organized and are directed by CHLA faculty. Each of the three placements has a sequential plan involving didactics, case conferences and supervision. The scheduling of all placement didactics and case conferences is to be accomplished in such a way that allows all interns to spend time together and for each intern to have individualized specialization training. All doctoral interns participate in two placements: Child/Family Therapy and Child/Adolescent Psychological Assessment. These two placements foster the development of generalist skills and are required of all interns. The third placement involves immersion in a specialty area.

This internship provides extensive supervision from a network of faculty supervisors. Each intern will have a supervision team whose role is to oversee the intern's training experience in its entirety. The supervision team will assume responsibility for intern evaluation and will be available to discuss all aspects of the intern's experience during the program year. Within each of the placements, the intern will have individual clinical supervision with a licensed supervisor. Interns will also receive a minimum of one to two hours of group supervision per week, and two hours of didactic activities per week. Additionally, all interns will meet with the Associate Training Director for an hour long professional roles seminar which will afford them the opportunity to discuss issues related to their overall experience.



The CHLA mental health and training programs have always been attuned to the steady growth of Spanish-English bilingual populations in Los Angeles. Interns in the 2020-2021 cohort will participate in activities designed to integrate Evidence Based Practices in Psychology across cultures and languages. Interns have the opportunity to receive training

and supervision from bilingual and bicultural psychologists. Spanish speaking interns receive individual supervision (from one of their supervisors) completely

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or partially in Spanish. Bilingual interns attend CHISTE (Children's Hospital Interdisciplinary Supervision & Training in Español) which offers interns with group supervision and training in Spanish to increase the effectiveness in the provision of mental health services to Latino clients. Within the realm of assessment, interns receive training in the evaluation of language proficiency among bilingual (Spanish–English) children to identify the most appropriate language for comprehensive psychodiagnostic testing and psychotherapy.

Interns will participate in training opportunities designed to develop strong interprofessional skills. Specific Interprofessional, Public Health and Psychiatry didactic activities coupled with brief primary care rotations will train program graduates to effectively apply interprofessional skills within their future areas of practice.

The internship program trains interns to effectively provide and refer to the appropriate Evidence-Based Practices in Psychology (EBPP) Models. Issues related to the application of EBPPs are addressed in intake clinics, supervision, and didactic activities. The Los Angeles County's publicly-funded mental health system now directs some of its funds to the clinical application of specific EBPPs. This has allowed the program to expand its capacity to train and provide EBPP services to children and adolescents, and their families. During the course of the training year, interns will learn about EBPPs such as Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), Incredible Years group therapy (IY), Seeking Safety, Parent-Child Interaction (PCIT), and more. The 2020-2021 internship class will be trained and conduct Incredible Years parent and child groups. Other EBPPs will be taught and practiced depending on each intern's specialty rotation.



## PLACEMENT ONE

### Child/Family Therapy Program

#### The USC UCEDD Community Mental Health Service

The Community Mental Health Service provides individual and family psychotherapy services to children and their families from culturally diverse backgrounds in the Los Angeles community. Psychology interns are trained and supervised in psychological intake and assessment, treatment planning and intervention with a particular focus upon applications of Evidence-Based Practices in Psychology. Interns gain experience in individual and family psychotherapy, group therapy, consultation, and community involvement.

The program is structured so that each psychology intern provides treatment/intervention in the form of outpatient psychotherapy to children, adolescents and their families who represent diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. These clinical services accommodate children exhibiting a broad range of emotional, behavioral, cognitive and/or neurodevelopmental problems. Typically, each intern will have a caseload of four to six child/adolescent patients within the Community Mental Health Service Placement depending on caseload in the specialty placement. Outpatient therapy can include individual child/adolescent therapy, family therapy, and group therapy. Services to children and families within this program are typically conducted in an outpatient clinic-based setting; home-based and community-based service opportunities are often included.



The intern will develop the ability to conceptualize treatment and intervention from a variety of methodological and theoretical perspectives; however, all the interns will be exposed to a variety of Evidence-Based Practice approaches. To meet this goal, faculty and supervisors facilitate a weekly didactic series covering child/adolescent intervention strategies, family assessment and therapy, and psychological assessment. In addition to the weekly didactic series, interns will also participate in supervised case conferences to cultivate an understanding of appropriate professional roles. Issues such as coordination of services, treatment planning, and referral and termination will be discussed during these didactic activities. Methods for supervision within this program may include the review of recorded sessions and face-to-face or co-therapy supervision. The intern will be required to develop familiarity with essential

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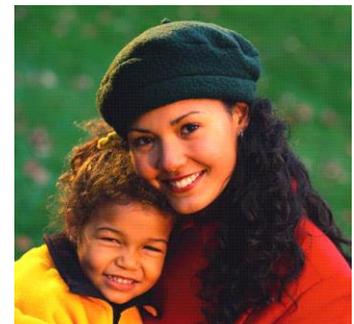
APA sources such as the Ethical Standards for Psychologists, Standards of Professional Practice for Psychology and other prescribed readings in psychology.

An additional component of the Child/Family Therapy Program placement is participation in the **California Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (CA-LEND) program**, a weekly interdisciplinary didactics and experiential program. The faculty of the CA-LEND program represents a wide range of disciplines including but not limited to the following: Audiology, Communication Disorders, Dentistry, Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics, Family Support, Nursing, Nutrition, Occupational Therapy, Psychiatry, Psychology, Public Health and Social Work.

## PLACEMENT TWO

### Child/Family Assessment Program The Psychological Assessment Program

As part of the Child/Family Assessment Program placement, the intern will develop competency in the psychological assessment of a range of complex diagnostic issues observed with children and adolescents. Referrals to the assessment program include children with co-occurring developmental disabilities including autism spectrum disorders and intellectual disabilities and mental health or behavioral concerns, children with chronic medical conditions, learning difficulties, exposure to trauma, and children referred to assess Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Mood Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, etc. Interns are closely mentored through live proctoring, weekly group supervision/case conference, and individual supervision.



All of the clients undergoing psychological assessment are recipients of on-going psychotherapy, and interns collaborate with parents, referring therapists, schools, developmental disability service providers, and medical providers in developing the assessment plan. It is anticipated that each intern will conduct 6 comprehensive evaluations of children and adolescents within the program year. Child and adolescent assessment and differential diagnosis are based on a complete psychological evaluation utilizing the following methods: administration of standardized psychological and academic achievement tests; structured parent, child and teacher self-report instruments; observation of play and parent-child interactions; clinical interviews (child, parents, teacher, etc.); observations of

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children in school settings; and the use of DSM-5 diagnostic criteria. Specific training is given in the following areas: developmental assessment, autism assessment, cognitive assessment, language proficiency evaluations, personality evaluation, emotional and social skills assessment, trauma focused assessment, play-based assessment, and family needs and support evaluation. Prevention and assessment for early identification of disorders and disabilities in children is given particular emphasis in this training program.

The interns achieve assessment competency in the following: conceptualization of individual assessment cases; formulation of appropriate hypotheses regarding behavior and diagnosis; selection of appropriate assessment measures; and development of meaningful recommendations for intervention. The interns will develop the ability to link assessment data to meaningful interventions and to convey assessment results in a family-centered, culturally and linguistically competent manner using both oral and written communication. Interns will also have the opportunity to present the assessment results to other providers working with the child (e.g. Regional Center, IEP team, medical team, etc.).

## PLACEMENT THREE

### Overview of Specialization Placements

At present, five different specialization placements constitute the third major component of the internship year. All specialization placements involve supervised clinical service. Interns will develop a caseload comprised of child/adolescent/or family patients from within a particular specialty program. Specialty programs are distinguished from one another by the nature of the client population. For this reason, the focus of clinical services may vary greatly among placements. However, all are structured around a weekly didactic and/or case conference program led by a team of faculty psychologists. For each specialty rotation, a faculty member working within that area provides individual supervision. All specialty rotations emphasize consultation and intervention, applications of psychological assessment, and participation in an interdisciplinary milieu.

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## Specialization Placements:

### Adolescent Medicine Specialty Placement

The mission of the Division of Adolescent and Young Adults Medicine is “to promote and advocate for the well-being of adolescents, their families, and communities.” In accordance with this mission, the Behavioral Services Program at the Division of Adolescent Medicine is an integral part of a comprehensive treatment team providing adolescents and their families with a range of services to address their unique needs.



This placement offers interns opportunities for training and interdisciplinary collaboration working with patients with multiple clinical and case management needs. The client pool includes a diverse, primarily low-income population of adolescents and families referred for services by physicians specializing in adolescent medicine and other health providers in surrounding communities, schools, probation departments, and other entities. Common diagnostic concerns include family problems, depression, disruptive behavior, eating disorders, substance abuse, transitional age, and sexual identity issues. Intern training includes supervised individual, family, and group therapy, participation in weekly Adolescent Rounds and in the Leadership and Education in Adolescent Health (LEAH). Interns collaborate with experienced adolescent medicine therapists, physicians, and other health care providers and have opportunities to develop clinical and leadership competencies as adolescent clinicians.

### Assessment, Consultation & Evaluation Placement

The Assessment, Consultation, and Evaluation (ACE) rotation for doctoral psychology interns involves taking an active clinical role in an interprofessional evaluation and treatment clinic for children and adolescents who present with a variety of internalizing and externalizing disorders, and who may benefit from medication as part of a comprehensive treatment plan. Children seen in the clinic are referred from across all program areas and present with a variety of complex mental health, medical, and developmental needs. Services are provided in a team-based integrated care approach, which provides interns with a unique opportunity to expand their clinical skills in an integrated ambulatory clinic setting. Interns in the ACE rotation gain experience delivering mental health services, including brief assessments and short-term intervention in collaboration with developmental-behavioral pediatricians, occupational therapists, nurse care managers, and speech language pathologists.

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Additionally, ACE interns play an important consultative role and have the opportunity to collaborate with primary therapists, child and adolescent psychiatrists and community providers to help clients reach their optimal functioning. As part of this specialization, interns will receive specialty supervision, participate in interprofessional didactic activities and case presentations, and gain leadership experience in team-based integrated care. This specialization provides interns with the foundational skills necessary to become leaders in dynamic, interprofessional and integrated care environments.

## Early Childhood Mental Health Specialty Placement

The Early Childhood Mental Health Specialty Placement is designed to provide exposure to a variety of clinical and consultative models appropriate for working with diverse children ages birth to five years, their caregivers/families, and community agencies that serve them. Young children referred to the program include infants and toddlers in foster care or exposed to abuse or neglect, preschool-aged children with acting out behaviors often as a result of trauma, young children with chronic medical conditions, and children with co-occurring developmental disabilities (including autism spectrum disorders) and mental health needs. The placement offers training experiences in relationship-based interventions with young children, including training in evidence based practices applicable to this age group. Specific models taught include Child-Parent Psychotherapy, Incredible Years, and Floortime therapy. Services may be provided in the clinic and/or in-home, and include extensive collaboration with referring agencies including preschools, early intervention programs, and the child welfare system. Interns in this placement are supervised using a reflective supervision model by faculty with expertise in infant-family and early childhood mental health. All supervisors in the placement are endorsed by the California Center for Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health. Videotapes are regularly used as part of supervision. Most of the supervisors in the Early Childhood program speak Spanish, and interns who speak Spanish are supported in bilingual development. In addition to individual supervision, interns attend a weekly seminar focusing on a range of topics related to early childhood mental health, cultural and linguistic competence, and weekly group supervision alternating its focus between Child-Parent Psychotherapy and Floortime treatment models.

## Pediatric Psychology Specialty Placement

The Pediatric Psychology Placement emphasizes training regarding the role of

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psychology in a health care setting. This placement focuses on consultation and intervention services for children and adolescents receiving medical care at CHLA. In this placement, the intern will have an opportunity to receive therapy referrals from one or more of the following medical teams: Craniofacial/Division of Plastic Surgery; Nephrology; the Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Diseases; The Pain Medicine Program; Endocrinology; Rheumatology; Medical Genetics; General Pediatrics and the solid organ transplant programs at CHLA. In addition to providing psychotherapy for children and adolescents coping with illness, the intern will have the opportunity to consult with the medical teams of their therapy clients, participate in interdisciplinary medical team rounds, advocate within school settings, and provide group therapy. Emphasis in supervision and didactics will be placed on Evidence-Based interventions in the field of pediatric psychology. Interns will participate in a weekly pediatric psychology didactic, as well as have opportunities to participate in case conferences.

## Trauma Psychology (Project HEAL) Specialty Placement

Project HEAL serves a variety of children, adolescents, and families who have experienced traumatic events, including abuse, neglect, accidents, medical trauma, exposure to community violence, and immigration trauma. Many of our clients have complex presentations complicated by intergenerational trauma, homelessness, foster care, adoption, or developmental disabilities. Project HEAL's training program is designed to help interns develop knowledge and skills reflected in the New Haven Trauma Competencies (2014). Project Heal offers training in a variety of clinical interventions for traumatized children and families, including Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TFCBT), and exposure to other evidence-supported psychological practices including PCIT. Trainees develop cultural competence in providing trauma-informed treatment to a diverse population at a variety of developmental levels. Interns will participate in supervised individual, family, and group therapy, weekly trauma didactic and case conferencing, and will collaborate with experienced trauma therapists and interdisciplinary professionals.

### **STIPEND, VACATION, AND FACILITIES**

The program offers a yearly stipend in the amount of \$36,000.00. Our interns are categorized as independent contractors rather than CHLA employees. Thus, interns are responsible for setting aside money for tax withholdings as their wages will not be taxed. In addition, while interns are not eligible for the CHLA benefits package, CHLA Human Resources will assist interns in enrolling in the health insurance market place and reimbursement for their health insurance

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costs will be provided by the program. Interns receive 10 days of vacation and seven additional holidays (New Year's Day, Martin Luther King's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas).

The Community Mental Health program offices are designed to accommodate both clinical service and interdisciplinary training. Clinical offices are available for client care, some equipped with one-way mirrors. Past funding by HRSA/GPE supported the creation of a "virtual campus" between the training offices and the Division of Adolescent Medicine. The video-conferencing facility is integrated into some clinic spaces, and several rooms are equipped with audio/visual observation equipment. Assessment and observation rooms are available for individual and group clinics. The Community Mental Health Program provides all assessment materials and equipment, including audiovisual equipment and computer-scoring materials. Interns are provided dedicated office and training spaces. These are state of the art clinical and training spaces that afford each intern his or her own computer, phone and workspace.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Prior to application all applicants are expected to have completed at least 4 years of graduate level training including 400 doctoral level intervention hours, and have written at least three child or adolescent integrated psychological assessment reports. Applicants must pass their academic program's comprehensive exams and be accepted into doctoral candidacy before the beginning of internship.

## APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The CHLA Doctoral Internship utilizes the uniform application developed by the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral Internship Centers (APPIC). This internship program agrees to abide by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, or use any ranking-related information from any intern applicant.

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All materials must be received by the **November 4, 2019** deadline. Applicants must complete the AAPI on line on the APPIC website, and make sure to upload the additional documents requested below. Prospective candidates will be notified by via e-mail on **December 2, 2019** whether or not they were granted an interview. Interviews are required, and are held during the month of January 2020. These on-site interviews are required and weigh heavily in the matching process. Interviews will be offered only to applicants who have submitted a complete application and only after these applications have been screened by the faculty.

**The following items constitute a complete application:**

1. A completed **APPIC Uniform Application** including
  - a. A current **Curriculum Vitae**
  - b. **Transcripts** of all graduate level coursework
  - c. A **psychoeducational evaluation of a child or adolescent** with all identifying information removed.
  - d. **Three letters of recommendation** from current graduate school faculty and practicum placement supervisors.

With inquiries, please contact Sara Sherer, Ph.D., Training Director, at [ssherer@chla.usc.edu](mailto:ssherer@chla.usc.edu) or Amy West, Ph.D., Associate Training Director, at [amwest@chla.usc.edu](mailto:amwest@chla.usc.edu)

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