
The Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut

Doctoral Psychology Internship Response to COVID-19

Our Current Situation

In March, 2020, the spread of the novel coronavirus and its corresponding affliction, COVID-19, resulted in shelter-in-place orders that have had unprecedented impact worldwide. As a doctoral psychology internship program, we prioritize the wellbeing of students, such that they have a rich training opportunity, while abiding by government regulations and guidelines (e.g.: social distancing).

The Child Guidance Center and its affiliate, Community Health Centers, Inc. are very fortunate to be able to transition nearly all behavioral health services to an online, telehealth platform. Each clinician, including interns, receives a company laptop, docking station, wireless mouse and keyboard, monitor, and personal Zoom account that provides a HIPAA compliant platform to provide telehealth sessions.

As such, the following services have been transitioned to telehealth for the duration of the pandemic:

- Individual psychotherapy
- Parent Guidance sessions
- Group Therapy
- Family Therapy
- Psychosocial Intake Evaluations
- Mobile Crisis Assessments
- Case Management Services

Likewise, all training activities, didactics, and supervisions are occurring through the Zoom platform.

Changes to the Internship Program 2020-2021

The Child Guidance Center is committed to continuing to provide quality training throughout the pandemic. Proportion of time spent in supervision, didactic activities, and clinical contact are expected to remain the same, and will be as follows on a weekly basis:

Supervision

- Two hours of individual supervision
- Group supervision
 - Psychological Testing
 - Group therapy
 - Attachment and Regulation Competency (ARC) Supervision
 - Mobile Crisis supervision*
 - Intake Supervision*

*Supervision for Mobile Crisis and Intake will be attended based on involvement with that service

Didactic/Education

- Grand Rounds
- Intern Meeting
- Didactic seminars
- Treatment Team (case consultation groups)

Clinical Contact

- 16 Clinical encounters per week minimum, including
 - Group therapy (one group minimum)
 - Individual therapy, family therapy, and parent guidance sessions
 - Mobile crisis evaluations
 - Intake evaluations

All of the above activities will occur over Zoom dependent on the state of pandemic. As restrictions relax, we expect an increase in face-to-face activities.

Due to the unknown nature of the pandemic in the coming year, some structural changes have been made to ensure maximizing intern experience in various domains. Changes most deeply impact the following elements of the program:

- Psychological testing/developmental evaluations: Because of the inherent need for face-to-face contact, as well as engagement with physical test materials, testing is not able to be done remotely. However, testing supervision will occur on a weekly basis, and if needed, test data will be supplied in order to facilitate conversation about interpretation, administration, report writing, and feedback. Interns may be expected to complete a psychological report based on provided data if unable to collect original data in the course of the year.

Developmental evaluations likewise are on hold until we return to the office. In its place, there will be a supplemental didactic experience regarding child development, developmental delays, and test administration.

- Rotations: The internship is structured so that each intern receives in-depth training in Mobile Crisis as well as intakes for six months each. While both intakes and mobile crisis calls can be done remotely, mobile crisis lends itself to a most rich experience when done in person. Consequently, Interns will not be participating in the Mobile Crisis rotation, but rather, receiving intensive crisis assessment training through didactics and direct experience conducting intakes, individual therapy, group therapy, and family therapy. Intake assessments will be expanded throughout the entire year to provide additional assessment experience.
- Consultation: Additional time and resources will be given to conducting Head Start Consultation for teachers and students in early childhood classrooms. Consultation and classroom observations will be done remotely.

As an integrated health care facility, CHC and CGC are taking all precautions necessary to keep our employees and interns safe, while maintaining quality education and training. If you have any questions please reach out to the Training Director, Julie Ringelheim, Psy.D., at ringelj@chc1.com