

Connections Internship Consortium



THE AIM OF THE CIC

The aim of the CIC is to provide Doctoral Interns with comprehensive and individualized clinical training that facilitates the acquisition and refinement of clinical/therapeutic skills in evidence-based assessment and treatment; that teaches Doctoral Interns to emphasize the unique strengths and needs of students with social, emotional, and behavioral disabilities; and that prepares future professional psychologists to become proficient in the delivery of high quality, culturally competent clinical services to schools, families, and communities.

SPECIALIZED DIDACTIC TRAINING TOPICS

- ❖ Diagnosis & Treatment of Complex Child & Adolescent Presentations
- ❖ Working Collaboratively & Proactively as Part of a Therapeutic Milieu
- ❖ Legal & Ethical Issues with Young People & Families
- ❖ Professional Development
- ❖ Strength-Based Treatment Approaches
- ❖ Complex Trauma & PTSD
- ❖ EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing)
- ❖ Evidence-Based Treatment Approaches
- ❖ Art Therapy
- ❖ Individual & Family Substance Abuse
- ❖ Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ❖ Crisis Prevention Interventions (CPI) and Techniques
- ❖ The Special Education System & Individualized Education Plans (IEP)
- ❖ Data Collection, Progress Monitoring & Outcome Measurements
- ❖ Cognitive and Neuropsychological Assessment
- ❖ Diversity trainings on race, ethnicity, gender identity, and LGBT issues.
- ❖ Trauma training
- ❖ Supervision of externs

INTERNSHIP POSITIONS

- ❖ Connections Day School - 2
- ❖ South Campus - 3
- ❖ New Connections Academy - 3
- ❖ Connections Academy East - 3

INTERNSHIP FORMAT & BENEFITS

- ❖ \$23,000 stipend
- ❖ Optional Healthcare, Dental and 401K benefits
- ❖ Laptop Computer
- ❖ Starts in mid-August and runs through the late-July
- ❖ Interns carry an average individual therapy caseload of 10-12 students, and run 3-7 groups per week
- ❖ Vacation Time: Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring, & Summer Breaks, all National Holidays, and a modified Summer Schedule (4 days per week – M, Tu, W & Th - for the last 5 weeks of the school year)
- ❖ Paid Sick Days (16), and Personal Days (2), for the year
- ❖ No pager, crisis phone line, or on-call duties
- ❖ Free lunch available daily from Organic Life
- ❖ Free parking
- ❖ Access to public transportation
- ❖ Access to a Clinical Library of books & manuals, and therapeutic resources & supplies
- ❖ Monthly allowance for program/clinical supplies
- ❖ Participation in Staff outings & events and team-building activities throughout the year

The Connections Internship Consortium is an member of APPIC and follows all APPIC Guidelines

LEAD CLINICAL TRAINING STAFF

Training Director

Kati Hefferon, Psy.D. - Dr. Hefferon is a licensed Clinical Psychologist who earned her master's and doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology - Chicago in 2009. She has worked in group practice and community mental health settings, and spent 5 years as a Clinical Administrator and Clinical Supervisor for the CIC program South Campus Therapeutic Day School. In 2015, Dr. Hefferon became a partner in the organization, and is currently an owner of Connections Day School, New Connections Academy, and South Campus.

Connection's Day School

Kristen Mittl Pollina, Psy.D. - Dr. Pollina has been with the Connections Organization since 1999, and became Clinical Director and Director of Clinical Training in 2000. All of Dr. Pollina's training and professional experiences have been with children, adolescents and their families, with a primary focus on high-risk populations, and a strength-based, integrative focus to case conceptualization, treatment, and supervision.

Giovanna Vitullo, Psy.D. - Dr. Vitullo has been with the Connections Organization since 2011. She became the Diagnostic Coordinator at Connections Day School in 2015. Dr. Vitullo has an extensive background in working with children, adolescents, and their families through her clinical training and professional experiences in various settings. Before becoming a Licensed Psychologist, much of her training was in settings with a focus on Cognitive Behavior Therapy, though there was always an integrative focus. She continues to bring this integrative focus to much of the work she does including her supervision approach.

South Campus

Vanessa Davidson, Psy.D. - Dr. Davidson is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Director of South Campus. She obtained her Doctor of Psychology degree from The Chicago School of Professional Psychology. Dr. Davidson's training and career focus on providing services to children, adolescents, and families presenting with a wide variety of clinical issues is highly consistent with the mission of CIC and the population served.

Caroline Novotny, Psy.D. - Dr. Novotny has been with the Connections Organization since 2016. She has worked as a primary therapist at both South Campus and Connections Day School. She became the Diagnostic Coordinator and Clinical Supervisor at South Campus in 2018. Dr. Novotny has worked with children, adolescents, and their families in multiple settings, assisting and supporting them in advocating for their psychological, emotional, and educational well-being.

New Connection's Academy

Gwen Grant, Psy.D. - Dr. Grant has been with the Connections Organization since 2017 as the Clinical Site Director for NCA. Dr. Grant is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist as well as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist. Dr. Grant has worked with children, adolescents and their families for 20 years within a variety of settings including inpatient, private practice, community mental health, public schools and therapeutic day schools. She specifically specializes in evaluation and treatment of individuals with Autism. Dr. Grant has supervised psychologists for 13 years and taught graduate courses as an adjunct professor.

Charlotte Edwards, Psy.D. - Dr. Edwards has been working in the field of Psychology for over 20 years, and specializes in Autism and Neuropsychology. She serves as our primary Autism Consultant and secondary supervisor for the Interns at CAE and NCA. Dr. Edwards has been a part of the administrative team at the Connections Organization since its inception back in 1998.

Connection's Academy East

Ruth Tompkins, Psy.D. - Dr. Tompkins has been with the Connections Organization since 1999 and was the Diagnostic Coordinator and program supervisor at CDS for 16 years before becoming the Clinical Director of CAE in 2015. Dr. Tompkins has been supervising trainees for 18 years and has extensive experience and knowledge in working with children, adolescents, and their families.

CJ Garcia, Psy.D. - Dr. Garcia has been with the Connections Organization since 2012. He started out as an extern at CDS before becoming the Assistant Clinical Director in 2015. Dr. Garcia has an extensive background in working with children, adolescents, and their families through his clinical training and professional experiences. His formal training is in family therapy and working with kids with Disruptive Behavior Disorder and ADHD. He has also served in numerous leadership and supervisory roles throughout his academic career.