

Child Advocacy & Assessment Program (CAAP) Clinical Psychology Practicum Placement McMaster Children's Hospital, Hamilton, Ontario



Who Are We?

The Child Advocacy and Assessment Program (CAAP) of McMaster Children's Hospital, now in its 27th year of service, provides assessment, consultation, and intervention services to children and caregivers where child maltreatment or parenting is an issue. Our team is composed of health professionals from varied disciplines including pediatrics, psychiatry, social work, nursing, child life, and psychology. We describe ourselves as an interdisciplinary team in that we share clinical responsibility for our cases and make all clinical decisions through team consensus.

Comprehensive Assessments:

We offer comprehensive assessments of various sorts including: 1) *child maltreatment assessments* (i.e., team provides an opinion as to whether a child/youth has been exposed to one or more forms of maltreatment), 2) *impact of child maltreatment assessments* (i.e., team provides an opinion regarding the impact of a child's exposure to maltreatment on their physical, developmental, cognitive, and psychological functioning and recommendations regarding their current and future needs across domains), and 3) *parenting capacity assessments* (i.e., focus is on assessing parent(s)' capacity to meet a child's needs). The CAAP team also offers a *Medical Care Clinic* for children with a history of maltreatment or a high-risk profile. Physical exams and developmental screens are provided by physicians on our team.

Intervention Services:

The CAAP team offers sexual assault follow-up and counselling for children/youth and their caregivers, individual therapy for child/youth exhibiting traumatic stress reactions or those with a complex trauma history, consultation to foster/adoptive parents regarding trauma-informed caregiving, a trauma training workshop series for caregivers and child welfare staff, and group intervention (e.g., emotion regulation skills-training for child-welfare involved youth).

Depending on the needs of our clients, our trauma-informed clinical practice can take various forms including psychoeducation, Trauma-Focused CBT, DBT-informed work, ACT, or emotion-focused counselling.

Who Do We Train?

Education and training are a primary mandate for our program. In addition to offering professional training to our local service providers and caregivers, we regularly have learners join us on rotation (e.g., pediatric & psychiatry residents, social work students). Graduate students studying **child clinical psychology** are accepted at the **Ph.D. level** on practicum placement.

Practicum placements can be arranged for either a single term (e.g., fall vs. winter) or for longer training periods (e.g., September – May). Trainees are expected to commit two days/week to the placement and the length of stay will direct the nature of training opportunities available to the student.

Who Are Our Clients?

The CAAP team accepts referrals typically from child welfare agencies across southern Ontario or from health professionals within the Hamilton Health Sciences hospital system. Our program services children aged infant to 18 years of age and their caregivers.

We also offer third party consultation to programs within our hospital, community-based agencies, schools, and to child welfare agencies where child maltreatment is a presenting concern.

What Do We Do?

Our clinical services are organized into four portfolios and include assessment, intervention, consultation, and education/training.

Interested parties are asked to follow the application process outlined in the Hamilton Health Sciences Practicum Training brochure (p. 8). If you have questions about this placement, you are welcome to contact:
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