



**Office of  
Mental Health**

**New York City Children's Center –  
Queens Campus**

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# **Psychology Extern Training Program**



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# Introduction

The New York City Children's Center–Queens Campus (NYCCC - Queens, formerly Queens Children's Psychiatric Center (QCPC)) is a children's psychiatric facility under the auspices of the New York State (NYS) Office of Mental Health (OMH). NYCCC provides high-quality, patient-centered behavioral health care services for children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances, with the goal of fostering recovery and successful functioning at home, in school, and in the community.

The facility was founded in February 1970 by Dr. Laretta Bender, internationally known as a pioneer in the field of child psychiatry, and perhaps best known as the developer of the Bender Visual Motor Gestalt Test. Dr. Bender reasoned that children and adolescents at Creedmoor Psychiatric Center could be more effectively treated in an independent setting dedicated to their care than on a unit within an adult psychiatric center. Dr. Bender's vision of treating children who require ongoing psychiatric care in facilities designed specifically for the treatment of children continues to shape our practice philosophy and patient care. The administration at NYCCC remains committed, as it has for more than four decades, to facilitating children's recovery in independent, non-threatening, child-friendly spaces. The facility's mission of providing quality, comprehensive behavioral health care services, with an emphasis on best practices, underscores its commitments to the highest standard of patient care and excellence in clinical training.

NYCCC is one of the largest psychiatric facilities for children and adolescents in the United States. There are 54 inpatient beds and more than 200 day hospital and clinic patients receiving behavioral health care services on the Queens Campus, which boasts a large staff of mental health professionals and childcare workers dedicated to providing coordinated treatment and services. NYCCC has an established commitment to community and family involvement. Treatment is individualized, with an emphasis on family involvement and the application of best practices, and is carried out by multi-disciplinary teams comprised of psychiatrists, psychologists, pediatricians, social workers, nurses, recreational therapists, teachers, creative arts therapists, and specialized child care staff, with the assistance of comprehensive case management services.

Since the early 1970s, the Queens Psychology Department has established solid training affiliations with local universities and has provided practicum, externship, and internship training for graduate students in clinical and school psychology programs. NYCCC– Queens also provides clinical traineeships for advanced child psychiatry fellows and adult psychiatry residents through affiliations with Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, Harlem Hospital Center, Saint Luke's Hospital, and Northwell Health (formerly North Shore- LIJ Health System).

## Facility Description

In addition to providing inpatient services for Queens County, the Queens Campus of the New York City Children's Center provides services to children and adolescents from Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Staten Island. Since 1995, the Queens Campus has also provided intermediate care services for most of Manhattan.

The Queens Campus patient care facilities consist of two colorful and contemporary buildings situated in Northeastern, Queens, along the border of the New York City borough of Queens and Nassau County, Long Island. Building 55, on which renovations were completed in 2007, contains the inpatient units, the outpatient clinic, and the administrative offices. Building 57, completed in 2008, is the Community Services building and houses two day treatment programs that provide services to youngsters ages 6-12 (Lower School Day Treatment Program) and 13-18 (Upper School Day Treatment Program), a short-term Intensive Day Treatment program that serves youngsters 7-18 who are temporarily unable to be maintained in a more traditional academic or treatment setting, and the Care Management program, which works in partnership with children and families to coordinate supports and services necessary to maintain youngsters at home in safe and stable families. Both buildings are located on Commonwealth Boulevard, in Bellerose. In addition, the outpatient clinic located at the Robert F. Kennedy School on the Upper East Side of Manhattan provides early assessment of childhood emotional problems and high quality mental health treatment for youngsters in the borough of Manhattan.

**Accreditation:** The New York City Children's Center (NYCCC) is a New York State Office of Mental Health facility comprised of three campuses located in Queens, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. It is accredited by The Joint Commission (formerly The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)).

The Psychology Internship Program on the Queens Campus is accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA). Information regarding the accreditation process, and the guidelines and principles for accreditation of programs in professional psychology, may be obtained from the APA's Commission on Accreditation (CoA). Contact information is as follows:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation American Psychological Association  
750 First Street, NE Washington, DC 20002-4242  
Phone: (202)336-5979  
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Email: [apaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaccred@apa.org)  
Website: [www.apa.org/ed/accreditation](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation)

## Patient Population

There are 54 inpatient beds and more than 200 day hospital and clinic patients receiving behavioral health care services at NYCCC- Queens. Youngsters up to age 21 are eligible for services. Admissions are generally on a voluntary basis, with referrals from acute care psychiatric hospitals, schools, clinics, courts, and community agencies.

## Clinical Services

The comprehensive program of care includes complete medical, psychiatric and psychological evaluations; individualized treatment plans; educational programming; family counseling; supervised group experience to facilitate development of social skills; and the development of community linkages for follow-up support. Hospital services and programs are designed to ensure the earliest possible return of patients to community treatment programs.

The NYCCC- Queens Inpatient Services Division provides comprehensive, individualized treatment, including psychotherapy, pharmacotherapy and educational programming, in a structured, therapeutic environment for children and adolescents up to age eighteen. The Community Services(CS) Division includes three day hospital programs, two outpatient clinics, a Care Management program, skill-based parent education, and outpatient clinical support services.

**Community and Family Participation:** The Queens Campus has a large number of volunteers, including community volunteers and college students who work with youngsters under close supervision; an active Advisory Council of representatives of community groups, professionals, parents and legislators; and family advocates who support and empower youngsters and their families, with an emphasis on quality of care and consumer satisfaction.

NYCCC- Queens is committed to the participation of family members in all aspects of treatment planning. Family involvement and family therapy are strongly encouraged, and when appropriate, supportive services, including Care Management services that prioritize behavioral health care, social service provision, and family engagement, are provided. Parents/guardians, and if appropriate, other family members, are asked to meet with children's therapists regularly, to attend planning conferences, and to participate in Parents' Advisory Committee Meetings. Parenting classes are offered to provide family members with the resources, tools and services to help build successful families.

## Cultural Diversity Training

Cultural Competence and Diversity Training are training priorities for NYCCC administration and staff. Each year, Interns, Externs, and hospital-wide staff participate in hospital sponsored training seminars on multiculturalism, inclusion, and clinical issues that reflect the diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds of families from Queens and the other boroughs of New York City. Opportunities to work with patients from diverse cultural, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds in this culturally inclusive environment that recognizes, appreciates, and capitalizes on diversity further advance staff and students' development of cultural competence and inter cultural skills, and assure a rich socio-cultural experience. The topic of cultural diversity is also addressed through supervision, assigned readings, and group discussions.

## Externship Training and Educational Goals

Externship training is coordinated by the Director of Clinical Training, training supervisors, and seminar leads.

**Philosophy:** The philosophy of the Externship is one of balancing supervision and training with intensive involvement in assessment, treatment team activities, and clinical work with children and adolescents with serious psychiatric challenges.

The Externship provides in-depth training in assessment, psychotherapy, and treatment planning for psychology students who are enrolled in accredited graduate programs in clinical or school psychology. The orientations of the Psychology Department staff are varied and include cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic, interpersonal, and integrative approaches. Training is integrative and child-centered.

Training, experience, and supervision in psychological testing and diagnostics is provided through case seminars, individual and group supervision by staff psychologists, and presentations at diagnostic conferences. Under close supervision, Externs are expected to provide family treatment in addition to seeing children and adolescents in individual and group therapies. Training in individual, group and family therapies, crisis intervention, clinical case management, and treatment planning is provided through seminars, Grand Rounds, case consultations and supervised experience.

**Goals:** The educational goals of the Externship are to develop existing skills in assessment and treatment, to familiarize trainees with the complexities of severe psychopathology and the role of the psychologist in institutional settings, and to encourage and provide opportunities for professional growth. Clinical work with families is considered a crucial aspect of the training. Sensitivity to both cultural diversity and ethical standards is considered essential.

**Responsibilities:** Externs typically have primary therapist responsibilities, including clinical case management functions, for two to three patients and families concurrently; co-lead psychotherapy groups; complete eight to ten psychological assessments per year; participate in treatment team activities and attend hospital Grand Rounds, diagnostic and case conferences, and training lectures.

**Supervision:** Externs are provided with at least two hours of individual supervision per week by a supervising psychologist, who directly oversees Externs' work on the units to which they are assigned. Additional supervision is provided as needed. Members of the Psychology Department are highly experienced in clinical work with families, and several supervising psychologists have completed advanced post doctoral training, including training in family therapy supervision and fellowships in evidence-based treatment.

**Seminars:** In addition to weekly psychotherapy and assessment supervision, Externs participate in didactics and clinical treatment seminars, including Psycho-pharmacology Case Consultation, a seminar on Psychopathology and Psychological Assessment, and supervision on Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. There is also an Extern Process group. Externs are expected, when able, to participate in other training seminars and hospital sponsored lectures and workshops, including Grand Rounds.



**Externs' Duties:** Externs are generally expected to work two and one-half days per week from September through June, as permitted by University policy or regulations. After a brief period of orientation, Externs are expected to serve as primary therapists for assigned cases, which may be on an inpatient, day hospital, or outpatient unit. Under supervision, Externs complete psychological assessments; provide individual, group and family therapies; and manage treatment and discharge planning for assigned cases. Externs participate in a variety of unit meetings and are expected to present cases at diagnostic and clinical case conferences. Externs meet with assigned patients a minimum of two times per week in individual therapy and are also expected to do family work. Externs may conduct group therapy with an experienced co-therapist or under the guidance of a supervising Psychologist.

In order to ensure exposure to a range of patients and supervisors, opportunities to complete psychological testing on units other than the primary units to which Externs have been assigned are provided.

Training Sites: Externs are assigned to training sites and units, and efforts are made to accommodate their preferences. The following sites are usually available for Extern training:

**Inpatient Units 554/555:** Externs' work on these co-ed units involves comprehensive team treatment of hospitalized youngsters from ages 5 to 13. Individual, family, play and group therapy approaches are utilized. The Real Life Heroes treatment model and Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy are integrated, when indicated, to promote development of affect regulation skills and help foster recovery following traumatic exposure.

**Inpatient Units 553/556:** Externs' work on these co-ed units involves intensive team treatment of hospitalized youngsters from ages 13 to 18. Individual, family, and group therapy approaches are utilized. Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Dialectical Behavior Therapy are integrated, when indicated, to help reduce negative emotional and behavioral responses and foster successful adaptation following traumatic exposure.

**Queens Lower School Day Treatment Program:** Externs assigned to the Queens Lower School Day Treatment unit conduct individual, play, family and group therapies with patients aged 6 to 12 years in a fully integrated clinical and educational program.

**Upper School Day Treatment Program:** Externs assigned to the Upper School Day Treatment unit work with adolescents aged 13 to 18 years, providing individual and group therapy within the context of a Dialectical Behavior Therapy Program. Family therapy is also utilized.

**Queens Campus Outpatient Clinic:** Externs assigned to the Queens Campus Outpatient Clinic conduct individual, play, family, and group therapies with patients aged 5 to 21 years, with opportunities to provide long-term psychotherapy for child and adolescent patients.

**Adolescent Clinic – Manhattan:** This program, located at the Robert F. Kennedy School on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, blends aspects of day treatment and outpatient clinic programs and serves youngsters up to age 16. Externs assigned to this unit provide individual, family and group therapies, and complete psychological testing.

**Prerequisites:** Full time, matriculated candidates who are enrolled in clinical or school psychology programs whose Externship or clinical practicum will be used to satisfy degree requirements will be considered.

Students who are selected for the Externship must have completed at least **two years** of full-time graduate study. Students should also have completed basic courses in cognitive assessment and projective testing by the beginning of the Externship year. Please note: Consideration for inpatient units will be given to candidates who will be 4<sup>th</sup> year students at the start of Externship.

## **Selection Criteria**

Requirements for acceptance as an Extern include:

- 1) The University's written approval for Externship
- 2) Submission of a curriculum vitae (CV) or resume
- 3) A comprehensive psychological assessment report
- 4) A personal interview

## **Application Process**

Interested students should contact:

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