



2008 CYHRNet Student Interns in Child and Youth Health Research FINAL REPORT

Marianne Hrabok – Cognitive Control and Emotion Integration in Children

Description

Marianne explored the interplay between various aspects of cognitive control and emotion in typically developing children.

University/Institution

Department of Psychology, University of Victoria

Supervisor

Dr. Kimberly Kerns, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology

Report

The internship funding provided by CYHRNet was critical in supporting multiple research activities as part of the project, *Cognitive Control and Emotion Integration in Children*. The purpose of this project is to investigate relations between aspects of cognitive control and emotion in children. This is important because cognition and emotion interact to produce important developmental advances in emotional regulation and social cognition, and investigation has clinical relevance for children with difficulties in this area.

Despite the significance of this topic, little research has actually examined the impact of varying levels of emotional content on tasks requiring cognitive control, nor how changes in cognitive control demands of various tasks impact on emotion processing. The funding provided by CYHRNet supported my research into this important area of study, and funding will help inform understanding of how the interplay between cognition and emotion develops and how this interplay relates to parental reports of emotional regulation and social functioning in day to day life. The paradigms developed will allow for investigation of these relationships in children with problems with emotional dysregulation and deficits in social interaction.

The funding from CYHRNet enabled me to develop skills at each level of research, from conceptualization of the research question, acquisition of advanced knowledge and literature review, development of novel methodology, recruitment of participants, data collection, and interaction with researchers and practitioners with diverse research interests. These are advanced skills that will serve as a foundation for future research endeavors in the field of clinical child psychology.

Throughout the course of my internship, I worked with people from diverse backgrounds and training. This was one of the richest aspects of my internship, as this experience cultivated my ability to communicate about my research with people of different training. I believe multi-disciplinary collaborations are a key aspect of rigorous, meaningful, and successful health research. Collaborations across disciplines was powerful in facilitating my understanding of the richness provided by diverse perspectives in health research.

The experience provided by the CYHRNet internship has reinforced my interest and professional development in the field of developmental neuropsychology, clinical psychology, and relations between cognitive functioning and social and emotional functioning in typically developing and clinical childhood populations. The funding provided by CYHRNet facilitated my participation in a project that challenged me to inquire and investigate a field of research in a novel way. This research experience stimulated my thinking about the great potential my field of research has, and inspired me to consider how much more there is to be accomplished. The internship was pivotal in enabling me to develop skills that will serve as a foundation for my future health research programs as a scientist-practitioner in the field of clinical child psychology.