

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES & PROGRAMS – ESTELLE SIEBENS COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Estelle Siebens Community Services (ESCS) is operated by Foothills Academy Society, a non-profit, charitable organization in operation since 1979. Foothills Academy is a well-respected Canadian and International resource for parents and professionals who seek information and expertise in the area of Learning Disabilities. Foothills Academy Society consists of two distinct components: 1) A school program for students grades three through twelve with diagnosed Learning Disabilities; and 2) Estelle Siebens Community Services (ESCS). The mandate of ESCS is to assist children, youth and adults who are experiencing difficulties in their school, work and/or home environments. These difficulties may be a result of undiagnosed Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), social/emotional challenges such as depression, anxiety and/or substance abuse, Autism Spectrum Disorders, speech/language difficulties and fine or gross motor difficulties. We conduct assessments, research, public education, social skills training, remedial instruction, and advocacy work. One of our fundamental principles is that all individuals deserve assistance, regardless of their financial circumstances.

### Job Overview

The Psychological Services & Programs department within Estelle Siebens Community Services is looking to add interns and Provisional psychologists with graduate training in School and Applied Child Psychology who are looking for supervision in the primary area of formal assessment. While there is flexibility in start dates, preference will be given to those individuals able to commit to full-time hours for at least one year. Work space (including computer usage for report writing) and testing materials will be made available for you to use. Supervision is provided on-site.

The Foothills Academy Assessment Team provides three separate services:

#### ***1. Psycho-Educational Assessments***

Team members will be expected to conduct comprehensive psycho-educational assessments (including test administration, scoring and norming of tests, test interpretation, report-writing, and debriefing with clients) in a competent and efficient fashion. Reports should be in keeping with the standards and quality of our team's psycho-educational assessment reports. Referrals originate from the Calgary community (and beyond) via our online intake form through our website. Clients may be children, adolescents, or adults. Our team specializes in providing quality assessments of Learning Disabilities and ADHD. However, our training, in conjunction with the presenting concerns of our clientele, provides us the opportunity to work with a variety of learning profiles. That being said, we do not have the currently accepted gold standard training for diagnosing ASD (i.e., ADI-R, ADOS-2), and thus we will refer to other well-respected agencies if this is the primary concern. We follow a PSW approach to diagnosing Learning Disabilities (LDAC) and use the DSM-5 for guiding other diagnoses.

#### ***2. School Consultations and Interventions***

##### Consultation Services to Teachers

The psychology team provides general consultations to the school program, which may include:

- o supporting development of IPP goals
- o assisting teachers in understanding student learning profiles (based on previous psycho-educational assessment reports on the student's file)
- o consulting with school staff about appropriate mental health counselling referrals
- o collaborating with teachers to ensure evidence-based strategies, programming, and assessments are being offered in the classroom

##### School-based Interventions

We currently provide two manualized interventions to the school program. The first is 'Brief Coping Cat,' a well-known and evidence-based program for treating children struggling with anxiety. There is a combination of a behavioral approach (e.g., involving exposure tasks, relaxation techniques, role play activities) with an added

emphasis on cognitive information processing factors (including anxious self-talk, emotional distress, and anticipatory dread). The program also includes a focus on social forces (e.g., peers, families) and emotion understanding and emotion management. Referrals will come from the school for students in Grades 3-8. Team members may be assigned to a group to act as facilitators; they will run 8 week sessions during the school day for a small-group, as well as facilitate parent communication, which may involve live or virtual parent sessions.

The second program focuses on executive functioning. The purpose of the ‘Unstuck and on Target!’ program is to teach students how to be more flexible, planful and goal-directed. More specifically, it aims to increase the cognitive flexibility, organization, and planning abilities of students with executive dysfunction so that they can more easily shift from topic to topic, task to task, and person to person; consider new ideas, alternative beliefs, or another person’s point of view; and work independently on multistep tasks in the classroom and beyond. The program will be focused on Grades 3-9. Both classroom-wide and small-group options are available, and particulars will be determined by school need. Parent and teacher communication will be expected from facilitators.

### ***3. Community-based Interventions***

Our community group programs are built on foundations from CBT, social learning, and social information processing theories and are delivered through psycho-educational and process-oriented models. Assessment team members currently facilitate and/or take on the supporting role of counsellor in the following community-based programs, which may run during the evening hours or on Saturdays:

- Survive and Thrive in Junior High
- Girls Only! (primarily a Counselling team program)
- Potential to expand Unstuck and Coping Cat into the community

### ***Other Tasks***

As a part of the Assessment Team, team members may also be asked to:

- Provide educational opportunities for students, staff or parents as needed
- Provide crisis incident protocols as needed to the school program
- Write E-Newsletter articles. Each team member will be expected to choose a topic to write an article for parents that will be shared through our monthly E-Newsletter.
- Provide support to the Grade 12 Transition Portfolio Program, which builds on the philosophy of the school built in Self-Determination Theory. This involves two in-person sessions; the first to develop the student’s self-awareness and understanding of their learning profile, and the second to develop the student’s self-advocacy skills by role-playing disclosure scenarios.

### **Qualifications**

- Master’s degree or PhD in School and Applied Child Psychology (or within internship for either degree)
- Registration with the College of Alberta Psychologists (CAP) as a Registered Provisional Psychologist in good standing or able to get status in the near future if degree is completed
- Proficiency in psychological assessment (cognitive, academic and social-emotional/behavioral)
- Excellent communications skills, both written and oral
- Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work effectively both independently, and as a member of a multidisciplinary team

Please note that practices will be expected to be based on established policies and procedures, including professional standards and ethics. This includes maintaining your licensure and insurance coverage at your own expense. An updated criminal record check is also required prior to starting work with us.

### **Application**

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and CV (including the names of three references) to Melanie Reader, Manager, at [mreader@foothillsacademy.org](mailto:mreader@foothillsacademy.org)