ChildServe

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**Everyday Experience**

As a psychology intern, I was able to work under a pediatric psychologist who specialized in diagnosing autism, attention-deficit disorders, and anxiety. Each week, I was presented with opportunities including:

- Acquire questionnaires for first-time patients
- Perform assessments such as WISC-V, WIPPSI, and ADOS
- Assist in diagnosing patients from the above tests
- Help the psychologist inform families on the results of the evaluations
- Sit in on case-study meetings
- Attend the Midwestern Psychological Association Conference and autism awareness events
- Advise families on community resources relevant to the child’s diagnosis
- Observe other specialties areas including: Mental health therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, concussion clinics, physical therapy, social workers, and applied behavioral analysis
- Listen to and understand ChildServe’s impact on children and families in the organization

**Research**

Apart from the day-to-day experience, I was also fortunate enough to aid the psychologist in research. This encompassed:

- Gather articles regarding gender differences in autism and social skills
- Collect references concerning gender dysphoria and social skills
- Accumulate data on the neurobiological basis of gender dysphoria

**Lessons Learned**

Throughout my time at ChildServe, there were a few life lessons I gained:

- Textbooks are nothing compared to real life; each child is unique, teaching something classes cannot. This easily became the most challenging part of the internship.
- I found my love for neuropsychology, the study of the brain, which would not have happened without this internship.
- I was able to put into practice the information on mental health conditions and illnesses I had been learning for the past two years at the University of Northern Iowa, which was very rewarding.
- By seeing first-hand the impact an organization has on a family, one’s passion for their field of study can grow.

**Future Advice**

To the students considering whether to do an internship:

- Take the chance to do something new; it will help build new connections, learn beyond the books, and potentially find a career for after college.
- Always take the opportunity to better understand the population one wishes to work with.
- Appreciating their perspective and life stories can create more of a passion in someone.

**Acknowledgements/References**

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All pictures and information were taken from the ChildServe website, with permission from Alexis Warden (AlexisW@childserve.org).

I am not an official representative of ChildServe.