



# Children's Case Management

## Placement Description

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Provides intensive case management services to children to link to and monitor needed services at the CSB or in the community, such as therapy, medication management, school placements, and teaching of parenting skills. Practicum students are expected to abide by rules and regulations as outlined by the Standard Operating Procedures and the Student/Volunteer Agreement. Practicum students are expected to maintain effective relationships with co-workers and customers based on courtesy, compassion and respect.

## Intern or Field Placement Responsibilities/Opportunities

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### Position One (total of two positions available)

- Role model appropriate parenting techniques
- Assist families in learning life-skills such as shopping and money management
- Write treatment plans
- Sit in on family sessions in home
- Networking with other agencies in town
- Demonstrating appropriate social skills by taking children out into the community
- Attend parent teacher conferences and other school meetings such as IEP or eligibility
- Accompany clients to doctor's appointments
- Accompany clients to psychiatric appointments
- Participate in staff meetings twice a month
- Participate in assessment and planning meeting (interagency) once a month

### Position Two

- Similar to position one above except case load specializes in children with intellectual disabilities

## Contact Information

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- Contact Person: John Wilson, Supervisor of Case Management
- Address: Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board-McNulty Center 463 East Washington Street Harrisonburg, VA 22802
- Telephone: 540/433-3100
- Fax: 540/432-6989
- E-Mail: [jwilso@hrccb.org](mailto:jwilso@hrccb.org)
- Website: [www.hrccb.org](http://www.hrccb.org)

**Read about students' experiences at this site below:**



## **Spring 2019 – McKenna Raymond**

This past semester, I was granted the privilege of completing my field placement experience within the Children’s Case Management department at the McNulty Center for Children and Families. Recognized as a branch of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board, the McNulty Center prides itself in providing services that “promote dignity, choice, recovery, and the highest possible level of participation in work, relationships, and all aspects of community life for individuals and families whose lives are affected by behavioral health or developmental disorders”. With case management being only one type of service offered within the facility, the McNulty Center also provides services such as behavioral health wellness and protection, juvenile justice, school-based services, autism services, psychiatric services, outpatient therapy, infant and toddler connection, emergency services, and developmental disabilities services.

Case management in particular serves children and adolescents with behavioral, developmental, or other severe mental health issues by linking them to needed services within the community and monitoring their progress; these services could include therapy, medication management, or even different school placements. The case managers at the McNulty Center collaborate with on-site psychiatrists, nurses, and therapists along with other agencies such as local schools, primary care physicians, mental health specialists, the Department of Social Services, the juvenile court system, and the Social Security Administration. Each case manager can have a caseload of up to thirty children at one time, but this number often fluctuates based on each child’s success rates.

Throughout the entirety of my time spent at the McNulty Center, I was an intern for one particular case manager who I would shadow on a daily basis. If her day was rather slow, I would then be allowed to shadow and interact with other case managers and their clients. I had a wide range of responsibilities in my four months as an intern, learning through both observation and independent application. The first sort of observing experience that I was introduced to was intake meetings. An intake meeting simply consists of a new client and his or her caretaker answering relevant questions for the case manager regarding the child or adolescent’s reason for either being referred to or seeking out the services that the McNulty Center provides. While others may have found this drawn-out process to be rather dull, I found it to be a considerably telling process for both the client and the caretaker. I would always be curious to see how involved the caretaker was with the client along with how effectively the client and caretaker communicated with each other. These meetings were also my first contact with the client – my first chance to become familiar with who they are and what they struggle with. I found it beneficial to take advantage of this opportunity and would try to connect with them as much as possible.

One of my favorite independent tasks to complete was the construction of monthly and quarterly summaries from the clients’ TDT updates. TDT stands for Therapeutic Day Treatment, which is essentially a therapy setting of professionals within each client’s school environment. Each month, the TDT workers will send the case managers an update about their designated child’s progress in school; this could include academic grades, peer relations, medication management, behavioral tendencies, personal hygiene, or emotional regulation. My job involved



consolidating the most important information about each client into a paragraph-length summary. I took the most pleasure in this particular task because it allowed me to become better associated with each client on a more personal level without having to question them about topics that they may have not felt the most comfortable discussing. Learning about each client's background and current hardships allowed me to find meaning in each client's behavior. I was also often asked to formulate contact notes which simply involved me documenting the interaction that occurred between the client and my case manager, but this task did not hold as much value as TDT summaries did to me.

Home visits for clients shifted between observation and independent experiences for me depending on the reason for the visit. My first home visits consisted of me accompanying my case manager for matters such as a face-to-face or a treatment plan update. A face-to-face home visit is required for clients that receive case management services, meaning that the client must be seen at least once every ninety days by their designated case manager. The case manager will often ask the client about recent events and how things are going at home or in general while the caretaker is informed of any information that has come to the case manager's attention by the therapist, the school, or any other relevant community-based agency. Home visits for treatment plan updates are moderately short and are usually used as a confirmation to continue the treatment plan that is already in place for the client. Less common reasons for solo house visits on my part mostly dealt with matters such as updating contact and housing information or confirming upcoming appointments. I found that being present in the client's home environment as well as seeing how their family system operates was very beneficial for filling in the pieces as to where this child or adolescent came from.

Some of my other most cherished experiences involved me sitting in on clients' psychiatric and therapeutic appointments. I found that the psychiatric appointments were much more emotional than I had anticipated them to be. Similar to a therapist, the psychiatrist asks how things have been going in the client's life whether that be problems related to home or school, emotional regulation, physical symptoms, internal conflict, or other pressing issues. I noticed that the psychiatric meetings dealing with continuation of medication were the most fluid while meetings introducing the possibility of beginning medication, switching medication, or going off of medication presented the most tension-filled appointments. I only had the chance to sit in on a couple therapeutic appointments, but I was extremely thankful because I did get the opportunity to view one of my favorite clients participate in play therapy. I admired the psychiatric and therapeutic appointments to such a large extent because they allowed me to analyze each client's nonverbal cues, behavioral tendencies, and breaking points while in their most vulnerable state.

Being exposed to client-specific meetings was also a tremendous interest of mine. Client-specific meetings varied in subject matters, but always addressed a significant concern that directly impacted and impeded a client's mental health progress. To give a more descriptive example, I had the privilege of sitting in on a client-specific meeting for a young boy who had recently started to develop aggressive behavior, insomnia, and schizophrenic symptoms. In order to improve the client's current condition, the child's grandmother, principal, vice principal, juvenile officer, TDT worker, DSS officer, and case manager gathered to develop a plan to alleviate the young boy's symptoms and ultimately determine how to better serve him. School visits play an extremely similar role in that they include the same group of individuals gathering



to decide how they are going to resolve the child's current circumstances. IEP and interdisciplinary meetings were the most common reason for our school visits, with both of them calling for review of the concerns relative to the child's academic grades, peer relations, and behavior at home and school. I gained such an immense amount from each of these types of meetings because it was always amazing to see how many people contribute toward the betterment of the child and how much collaboration occurs throughout each child's mini support system.

The most lasting moments that resonated with me most from this field placement were my time spent with clients during transports. Transporting clients was one of my main responsibilities as an intern, whether that be to and from appointments or to and from other necessary locations such as a grocery store, a realtor's building, a phone company, or a Social Security office. I valued these transportation trips because these were some of the only moments that I was granted one-on-one time with each client. I will soon be attending graduate school with a focus in Clinical Mental Health Counseling for young trauma-care patients, so being able to communicate effectively with these clients who possessed varying mental health challenges was exceptionally important to me. This aspect of my field placement better prepared me for my future occupation by teaching me how to read nonverbal cues, how to set the pace for conversation depending on the client's condition, and how to treat each client as a survivor rather than a victim. The last part became substantially important to me because I recognized how reluctant clients were to discuss their previous trauma or current condition once we had already become familiar with each other – they did not want to be pitied, they did not want to be apologized to, and they did not want to be treated like an outsider.

The remaining time at my field placement site was spent on completing miscellaneous and rather unfamiliar tasks for clients and their caretakers who were not fully capable of accomplishing them on their own. Some tasks are as follows: shopping for lice repellent, searching for a map of roadways for a local region, contacting shelters and apartment complexes regarding availability, helping caretakers fill out food stamps/Medicaid forms and rental applications, contacting phone companies, scheduling taxi rides, contacting pharmacies to check which medications are in stock, and picking up applications/making appointments for clients at the Social Security office.

Overall, I was extremely pleased with my time spent at the McNulty Center. Given my future plans, this opportunity to work with such a wide age range of children with varying mental health challenges was such a blessing and affirmation as to what I want to spend the rest of my life doing. The only drawbacks that I found to be a disadvantage during my field placement were the sporadically slow days; if there were no appointments or tasks assigned to me that day, there was not much that I was capable of doing besides schoolwork. However, I believe that this would be the case for almost any office-related internship.

Furthermore, a huge advantage to being an intern within the case management department was the amount of room I was allowed to explore. This is not an office job where you sit in a cubicle – I found myself in a different context nearly every day where no two clients were the same. I encourage any individual who plans to intern at the McNulty Center to take initiative and always remember to ask if any case managers need assistance with any tasks or have any upcoming appointments that you could sit in on! The more you ask, the more they will



remember to include you. The McNulty Center was everything that I could have asked for in an internship and I am eternally grateful for this opportunity.

### **Spring 2018 – Lakeisha Hawkins**

This semester I completed my field placement at the McNulty Center, specifically in the Children’s Case Management Department. As a division of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board, the McNulty Center’s mission states that the agency “provides services that promote dignity, choice, recovery, and the highest possible level of participation in work, relationships, and all aspects of community life for individuals and their families whose lives are affected by behavioral health or developmental disorders.” At the McNulty Center, case management provides services that link at-risk, mentally ill, or emotionally disturbed children to community resources, or services within the CSB that will benefit them. These services can include therapy, medication services, and other useful resources. Once the client is linked to appropriate services, case managers assess whether or not the services are beneficial and monitor client progress.

As an intern, I was able to gain many valuable experiences. One thing that I experienced quite often was client transports. During transports, I would pick up a client either from school or home and bring them in for therapy or medication appointments. While transporting clients, I was able to talk with them and get to know them. I enjoyed transports because the children seemed to be more relaxed in the car and were willing to have conversations with me about things like school and what they like to do in their free time. I was also able to accompany a case manager on home visits, meetings, and court cases. During home visits, the case manager would check on the client and speak with the guardian about how the child is doing with services, or how the child is doing in school if that was the presenting issue. One of the main experiences that I was able to be a part of was meetings. I attended several child specific meetings and family partnership meetings for clients. At these meetings, representatives from local agencies like the school system, Department of Social Services, court services, as well as the child’s guardian would come together to make a plan that would help the child and the child’s parents resolve issues that were keeping the child from being successful in services.

I was able to observe truancy court twice and it was a different, yet exciting experience for me. I sat in the courtroom with a case manager who usually had to testify regarding the client’s compliance with services. At court I was able to learn how the court system works and how the CSB interacts with the court in order to offer services that will benefit the population that they work with. It was interesting to experience court because it was my first time being exposed to the judicial system in Virginia and I was able to learn how everyone fulfills their role in the court system.

Another experience that I was able to gain at McNulty was visiting a residential facility. I travelled with my supervisor and another colleague to Culpeper to visit a residential facility called Childhelp. From this experience I learned about another sector of the community that case managers interact with in order to get their clients linked with services that are most beneficial to them. While at the facility, I was able to see the grounds and interact with the clients that we were there to visit.



As an intern, I had many opportunities to experience different things and that is one of the things that I liked most about McNulty. I was able to choose what kind of meetings I attended and other experiences that I felt were more relevant to my interests. For me, McNulty was the perfect site because I was not stuck behind a desk all day, but I also was not constantly on my feet. At McNulty, I was able to work in a calm environment while also being exposed to many other environments such as schools, court, or the Department of Social Services. However, because it is more of a desk job, some days there is more downtime than others. Sometimes I got restless with nothing to do, but I was able to work on other assignments if the case managers had nothing for me to do.

One of the main things that I learned at McNulty was how to interact with the at-risk population. Before field placement, I had not worked closely with others who were so different from me. This experience gave me insight on how to be professional with people who come from different backgrounds than me. I also learned how to interact in a professional way with coworkers and my supervisor. Another skill that I gained during my time at McNulty was documentation skills. Every interaction with a client had to be written about and scanned into their file. I had to learn how to write concisely about what the client told me and other things that I found important during the interaction. Learning these skills allowed me to prepare myself for the professional field where I will be interacting with clients and coworkers.

One piece of advice that I would give to students who are considering placement at McNulty would be to try to leave your week open as much as possible so that you are able to be at the site as much as possible. I went on Monday mornings when I did a lot of transports, Thursday evenings, and Fridays. I had no Friday classes, so I was able to spend all day at the site. Fridays were usually slow at McNulty, so I would not recommend having Friday as your open day. It would also be good to leave your evenings open because you may be asked to mentor. Mentoring can only take place in the evenings when the children are out of school. I would highly recommend being a mentor because the children really enjoy it and as an intern, you will be able to learn a lot from it.

Overall, I really enjoyed my time at McNulty and I feel as though it was a great decision to intern there. The skills and experiences that I gained there are invaluable, and I feel equipped to enter the workforce because of field placement and my time at the McNulty Center.

### ***Fall 2017 – Kristin Gross***

McNulty Center for Children and Family Services is a part of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board. Its mission is to “help people maintain their independence while living with severe and persistent mental health, substance use and developmental disorders.” The McNulty Center evaluates the situation and needs of a child and then links them to suitable services while consistently monitoring their care and conditions. They serve children, 18 years or younger, from Rockingham County and Harrisonburg City of all gender, races and ethnicities. No two clients ever look the same. They can range from showing signs of ADHD to needing hospitalization for suicidal thoughts. The McNulty Center is made up of many services: Case Management, Out Patient Therapy, Medication Management, Family



Care Coordination, Mobile Crisis Service, and Early Intervention Specialist. I worked in the Case Management Department during my field placement experience.

My first day immediately set the tone for what was expected of me as an intern. Only a few hours on the job, I was asked to use an agency's car to go to a client's house and fill out a Food Stamp Application with the mother because she could not read English well. I remember feeling slightly uncomfortable because I had never filled out a ten-page government document before, let alone interacted with someone whose preferred language is Spanish. Due to my supervisor, John and case manager, Stephanie, I learned how to quickly embrace situations that were outside of my comfort zone.

One of the first things I learned was that for every interaction with a client, there must be a contact note documented. Interactions can range from calling a client to inform them of a doctor's appointment to a face-to-face interaction like filling out social service documents with them (Food Stamps, TANIF, Fuel Assistance, etc.). The main source of my contact notes came from transporting clients to and from their med management and therapy appointments. During these interactions I was able to gain clients' trust and develop deep connections with them. I will never forget how excited a client was when her grandmother let her bring in real mash potatoes to her class Thanksgiving Day Feast. She informed me that they only get to eat the "real" kind for special occasions. This is just one of the many instances where I realized how absorbed I was in the "JMU bubble."

During my internship, I witnessed the one-hour intake process where the case manager has to ask the client's parents everything about their family, school, social and behavioral aspects. I accompanied Stephanie on many "surprise" in-home visits for the clients. This is where we were able to get a sense of the real environment the child is living in and address any problems. I also attended John's anger management group called Choices where I was able to analyze the progress of the children throughout each session.

While working at that McNulty Center I was able to immerse myself in a variety of new experiences. I attended truancy meetings where an Attendance Improvement Plan is held to correct the absenteeism of a student. If the student does not follow the plan then a referral is made to the courts. I was able to attend a court hearing for a client that did not follow the plan. My client was sentenced to ten days in a detention facility and issued a family planning meeting to be put in place. I had the opportunity to visit the detention center to have a face-to-face visit and see the structure of the facility. I also attended the family planning meeting where a CPS, truancy, case management worker all discussed the next steps for the client after detention. The result of the meeting was made to remove him from his current living situation and move him into his relative's house.

I also had the opportunity to attend FAPT (Family Assessment and Planning Team) meetings. When Medicare does not cover a service a client needs then the case manager will make an argument to FAPT to allocate funding for the service. Usually this is for clients who have severe behavioral problems and need to go to a residential facility where there is 24-hour care, guidance and protection. During my internship I took a trip to Richmond with my supervisor and case manager to visit clients who have been in a residential facility for years.

If it weren't for my field placement site, I would have never been exposed to the diverse community in Harrisonburg. I now understand the responsibilities and expectations for a case manager and how to connect with people who come from a different background.



A clear advantage for working at this field placement site is that you will never get treated like a “typical intern” –one who just does desk work for their supervisors. You truly get hands on experience where no two days look similar. For example, I accompanied John to Sentara RMH Medical Center where we visited a client who tried to commit suicide the night before. Being close in age to the teen, John let me give my input and advice to her. Afterwards he applauded me for how well I was able to connect with her. I loved working for an organization that consistently gives feedback to help develop your professional skills. The biggest advantage of working for the McNulty Center is the culture they have created amongst their employees. There was never a dull moment in the office between the seven case managers. Everyone is so supportive of each other. Whether it’s a client in crisis or a difficult meeting, the case managers are great outlets to debrief your experiences.

Being exposed to children was one of my favorite aspects of this internship because I had never worked with this population. Sometimes I found it to be emotionally challenging when I found out that a guardian was not complying with the case manager’s recommendations to improve their child’s well being. Even though I found this frustrating, I learned how to keep my composure and act professionally. One of the reasons I believe I had such an incredible experience is because I was able to work a half day on Tuesday and the whole day on Thursday. If I worked on a Friday I could see how this would be a disadvantage because an intern would experience a lot more downtime and missed out on invaluable experiences. Therefore, for future interns I recommend setting up your class schedule so you could avoid this.

At the McNulty Center, I learned how to assess the situation, connect the child with the proper resources and the do a follow up with the client to make sure the resources were the best fit. This is important for my future career goal as an Industrial Organization Psychologist. I will assess the company’s current situation, discuss options to make the company more efficient and then make sure these options were the best fit for the company. I also improved my communication and networking skills, which built up my confidence in myself. I am extremely grateful to have had the chance to work with such inspiring people that had such an impact on my JMU career and future career.

### ***Spring 2017 – Samantha Tanzola***

I completed my Field Placement at the McNulty Center for Children and Families, which is a branch of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board. The mission of the McNulty Center is to provide effective and community-based services to children and adolescents who have physical, mental, and intellectual disabilities. There are many services offered at the McNulty Center, the most notable being individual and group therapy, psychiatric and nursing services (there is an on-site doctor and psychiatric nurse at the McNulty Center that both prescribes and monitors psychiatric medication), preventive services (this includes regular therapy and medication appointments, and routine check-ups), behavioral wellness services (such as support groups and the Choices group that is tailored to adolescents with substance abuse problems), and the infant and toddler connection. The infant and toddler connection is an at-home early-prevention service for toddlers with intellectual and physical disabilities. The McNulty Center also offers case management services. Case managers are assigned to clients to assess the needs and preferences of those individuals and link them to services in the community.



The case managers then continually monitor those services and regularly (every two weeks or so) see the client. During my field placement I worked solely with the case managers.

My responsibilities at my site were accompanying case managers to home visits, attending parent-teacher conferences and child-specific meetings, transporting clients to appointments, linking clients to other services in the community, writing contact notes for clients, and helping parents assist their children with basic needs (such as making them doctor appointments and finding their children transportation to school). During home visits I would take notes and assist the case manager with anything else that they needed. I attended child-specific meetings and parent-teacher conferences with case managers to give me perspective about how the case managers work with the schools in the community to help their clients. A big part of my responsibilities were linking clients to other services in the community. For example, if a child was misbehaving at school, I would network with other agencies in the community (such as Big Brothers Big Sisters) that I believed would help this client. I also helped the client's parents with anything from helping them file for disability, finding transportation for their children to get to school, and making doctor appointments for their children.

I really enjoyed my experience at the McNulty Center, the work environment was very welcoming and laid-back, but not so laid-back that I felt that I was not being challenged. However, there is a lot of down time at this site. For example, if the case managers did not have an appointment for me to go to or a client they needed help linking to other service, there was not much for me to do. Therefore, this site might not be suited for someone that wants a lot of hands-on experience. There can be a lot of down time, and a lot of my job responsibilities was shadowing the case managers. I enjoy shadowing a lot, but this may not be suited for someone that likes to do everything themselves. Because of the fast and slow past of the McNulty Center (as in it is either really busy or not busy at all), this site requires you to have a pretty flexible schedule. I had a full course load (16 credits) while I was at this site, and was only able to come in the morning and early afternoons. Since the case managers do a lot of their work in the later part of the afternoon (2 pm-5 pm) when kids are out of school, my schedule caused me to miss out on a lot of opportunities, like mentoring. Interns are encouraged to mentor clients, but in order to do so, you have to be available after school hours.

An advantage of this site is that every day is different and things never get dull, and you also have the opportunity to work with six different case managers and their clients, so you get to work with a wide variety of clients. A disadvantage of this site that I think prospective interns should be made aware of is transporting. Since children and adolescents are at school during the day, and most of their parent's work during the day, they do not have a way to get to the McNulty Center for their appointments. Therefore, either a case manager or an intern will go to pick up this child or adolescent at their school to bring them in for their appointment. The intern may also have to pick up the client's parents if the parent is attending the appointment. You use the McNulty Center agency vehicle to do this transporting so nothing is coming out of your own pocket. There is an advantage to transporting because you get the opportunity to talk to clients you may not have had the opportunity to do otherwise, and you get to interact with a wide variety of people. However, not everyone likes to drive or would feel comfortable transporting clients. Therefore, I feel that it should be made more cognizant to prospective interns that transporting is a part of the job responsibilities as an intern.



I have learned a lot from my experience at the McNulty Center, but the most valuable thing I learned is how to network with other people and agencies. At the McNulty Center a big part of my job was calling other agencies in the community and forming a partnership with them to help a client. This required networking skills, communication skills, and proper phone etiquette. These will surely help me at any job, but especially the career field of human resources that I am interested in. While working in a human resource department in a company, a huge part of my job would be effectively communicating with people, and networking with other departments within the company to create a cohesive working environment. Through my field placement I have also learned about different kinds of therapies, which will not only be helpful in the mental health field, but in any field I choose to pursue after college. In any career path you are going to have to be able to understand people, how they work, and how to help them. Through sitting in on countless therapy sessions I have learned effective therapy techniques and conflict resolution skills that will surely help me in any career.

My field placement at the McNulty Center for Children and Families was a very positive experience. I am particularly impressed with the way the case managers help their clients, their efficient work methods, and my supervisor John Wilson, who created a welcoming and cohesive working environment for all.

### ***Fall 2015 - Kayla Palfrey***

Children's Case management is a part of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County Community Service Board (HRCSB). The mission statement of the HRCSB is to provide "services that promote dignity, choice, recovery, and the highest possible level of participation in work, relationships, and all aspects of community life for individuals and families whose lives are affected by behavioral health or developmental disorders". At Children's Case Management, we help our clients, who are under the age of 18, gain access to all of the services in the community that they could benefit from. We work with parents, schools, psychiatrists, therapists, and other professionals to create the best possible environment for our clients.

During my time with Children's Case Management, I have been fortunate to have various experiences with a lot of different types of people. I have worked most closely with a mother of one of our clients, who speaks Kurdish. I have been helping her fill out paperwork to apply for citizenship, and my supervisor and I have helped her apply for and move into a new apartment. Originally, I was very nervous about working with someone who does not speak the same language as me, but I learned how to use our interpreting service and how to use body language and facial expressions to communicate with this client.

I was also able to sit in on and participate in various different meetings with families, such as home visits, school visits, and psychiatry appointments. During home visits, my supervisor and I would discuss how the child's behavior has been at home and any concerns that the parents have. During a school visit that I went on with one of the case managers, we observed a kindergartener in class, talked to her teacher about her behavior, and talked to her therapeutic day treatment worker about her progress since starting school. We then went and had a home visit with her mother and grandparents. It is interesting to gain input from parents and professionals to get the



big picture of a child's performance. I also had the opportunity to visit a teenaged client in a detention center with one of the case managers. This client had been in and out of the detention center many times. We discussed with him about what would happen when he got out this time. Seeing a client in this environment was very interesting. Being able to see how all of these different aspects of a child's life come together has been very eye opening for me.

One thing that I was able to do that may not seem as interesting as the field work, but I really enjoyed, was completing quarterly performance updates for some of our clients. For each client, the case manager creates goals and objectives that are to be worked on. Every quarter of a year, case managers must submit a performance update for these goals and objectives. I learned how to pull information from contact notes, medical notes, and any other information on the client, to write the quarterly updates. This was a good learning opportunity for me because I am studying to be a special education teacher. Special education teachers do similar paperwork on goals and progress for their students, which must be updated annually.

Working with Children's Case Management has been extremely eye opening for me. I have had so many great experiences during my time there. All of the case managers were so friendly and always happy to have me tag along to their meetings with clients. On slow days, there can be a lot of down time when the case managers are doing paperwork or making phone calls that they do not need assistance with, but there is usually something you can help out with around the office. My favorite part of working with Children's Case Management has been going on home visits and talking with parents about their children. Often times, the parents will talk about difficulties they have with their child's teachers, which has helped me realize how I can better connect with parents in my future as a teacher. I also really enjoy listening to the similarities and differences between the parent's descriptions of their children's behavior and the teacher's descriptions of their behavior.

The biggest thing that I have learned since working with Children's Case Management is to take into account my biases towards people who are different from me. Before I met one family that one of the case managers was working with, she told me that the mother lives in a trailer and relies on her parents for everything. So, I assumed that she probably would have a messy home and probably would not care a lot about her child's education. This was not true at all, the home was neat and tidy, with a few kids' toys on the floor, and when we spoke to her about her child at school, the mother was extremely knowledgeable about everything going on at school. This is the day that I realized I needed to notice my biases before making judgements about people that I have not gotten to know. That day I also learned that parents, no matter how uneducated themselves, are usually experts on their own children.

The lessons that I have learned since working with Children's Case Management will help me in my future as a special education teacher. I now have the skills to better understand how to work with diverse children and families, something that will really come in handy for teaching in the DC area, which is where I hope to teach one day. I also have the skills now to work with parents in a more respectful and unbiased way, which is important in being a teacher for students with special needs. I have enjoyed my time with Children's Case Management and I have learned a lot.



### *Fall 2015 – Hayden Heath*

The experience at the McNulty Center for Children and Family Services was one that was filled with valuable lessons, as this site experience was able to foster my professional skills. Services provided by my site included: “case management, individual and group therapy, psychiatric and nursing services, prevention services, in-home and in-school services, mental health support services, developmental evaluations, and the infant and toddler connection program (a.k.a. PACE: ages 0-3)”. The mission of this site explicitly states that they want to provide adequate services that promote ‘dignity, choice, recovery, and the highest possible level of participation in work, relationships, and all aspects of community life for the individuals and families whose lives are affected by behavioral health or developmental disorders.” During my time at the McNulty Center, I was able to watch this mission statement in action because every day that I worked with the child case managers, I was able to see their collaboration with the therapist and psychiatrist in an attempt to provide the best possible services for their clients.

This site provided many opportunities to shadow the activities of the daily tasks of a child, family, and case manager, as well as the opportunity to perform some of these daily tasks. These experiences include: documentation opportunities, client-transports and in-home visits, and lastly opportunities to shadow assessments. Initially working with my supervisor Sarah Deavers, I was able to shadow her on her home-visits to check-in on families, as well as get families to sign treatment plans for the clients. Another opportunity found at the McNulty Center was the chance to document interactions with or for clients. For example, making phone calls is part of the linking process when you are a case manager, and after a conversation with an agency, school, or other service provider about a particular client the case manager must document each contact in a note. The case manager must also document interactions with the client as well. These opportunities gave me the time to experience how to document contact notes to meet the stringent HIPAA requirements for the agency to be funded appropriately. Client-Transports and in-home visits were initially conducted with my supervisor, but eventually I was able to complete my own home-visits and client-transports. These experiences allowed me the opportunity to show my professionalism and convey my competence in the field work experience. These experiences required much planning to make sure that the appointments were confirmed, as well as knowing when to pick the client up for their appointments. These moments were the highlight of my experience because I was able to work with the clients hands on without supervision. Knowing that I had the confidence from my supervisor to complete these acts alone made me feel needed in this opportunity. Lastly, I was able to observe many assessment types at this site, and eventually conduct one my-self. The first assessment that I was able to observe was called a VICAP, where I was able to watch John assess a client for TDT. This client struggled at school and needed some assistance during the day because of the lack of focus and aggressive behaviors. I was able to gain a valuable experience from this observation, and towards the middle of the semester, I was able to conduct an assessment. During this opportunity, I contacted a client and helped them fill out an intake form over the phone. This was a great experience to see the initial process that families must go through to acquire services. An



opening intake assessment was the last thing that I was able to observe at the McNulty Center, and I traveled with Sarah to a client's home and conducted a 2-hour intake assessment to sign the client up for a treatment plan and case management services. I was able to observe the aggression of a very young child that was oppositional defiant, and this experience allowed me the opportunity to see the hardships that the case workers deal with on certain cases. The child was calling my supervisor many derogatory names which was unwarranted.

The impression that I have of this site is that it could have been better and could have had more opportunities if I was able to spend more time at the site. This site necessitates that the intern have a light academic schedule because this site does not always lend itself to constant work throughout the day. For example, my schedule only allowed for me to work Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, and as a result, I was only able to work these days rather than coming in when my supervisor needed me. MY chaotic schedule created a disadvantage for me, and I would caution the next intern because of this issue. I think if I would have had a fluid schedule, I could have attended more opportunities at this site, but my schedule was pretty set in stone (Mondays and Tuesdays). An advantage of this site is that the supervisors are willing to offer every opportunity that is available, and the advantage of this site is that when your supervisor is not available the other case workers are willing to offer you opportunities. This site has many opportunities to offer as stated above that allow the intern to learn how to document interactions with clients as well as learn to transport clients to appointments and coordinated services. I thought that the work environment was very laid back rather than extremely formal, which I was expecting at first, and each staff member is willing to offer help and assistance. I recommend the next intern to work through the orientation process as quickly as possible, so that you can start working hands on with the supervisor at this site. Again, my impression is that if you want to get the most from this site you need a fluid schedule where you can plan around your supervisor to come in ahead of time to gain access to these opportunities.

I learned a great amount of skills over the course of the semester and the mid-term evaluation made it clear what attributes I really needed to focus on. Psychology does not lend itself to working as a social worker, and honestly, I felt incompetent while at this site. I made a mistake initially at my site because I did not dress appropriately enough to show professionalism. I think for my future career and vocational goals have been influenced a great deal because of this experience. I was able to learn that I didn't want to be a case manager in my future, as well as gain a sense of direction for where I wanted to go after graduation. During this experience, I slowly developed my desired future career goals, and now I know that I would like to work with a different population of people. I am now applying for graduate school for a master's program in applied behavioral analysis.