



Allendale

Hope and healing start here.



Relational Re-Enactment Systems Approach to Treatment

The Allendale Association
Bradley Counseling Center

Master's Level
Clinical Practicum
Information Packet
2024-2025

Introduction to Allendale

The Allendale Association is a private, not-for-profit organization located in Lake Villa, Illinois, 50 miles north of Chicago. Founded in 1897, Allendale serves youth with emotional and behavioral challenges, and their families. Allendale's main programs include the following: (1) clinical and community services, (2) educational services, and (3) residential treatment services. The Clinical and Community Services Department consists of Outpatient therapy and psychological testing for children, adolescents, and adults in the community; Specialized Foster Care; Community Support Services (CSSSP - in-home therapy for intensive stabilization and support services and aftercare for residential clients); as well Shelter & Transitional Adolescent Resources (STAR). Allendale's Educational Services offers therapeutic day school programs (Stepping Stone at the Lake Villa campus and LINC in Woodstock, IL) that serve at-risk students from local area school districts; the school also provides educational services for the youth in the residential program. Allendale's residential treatment program provides intensive treatment to youth who have severe emotional and behavioral disorders. The residential program is considered "high end" due to the severity of client acting-out behavior (i.e., significant aggression toward self and others). There are nine units on the Lake Villa campus (including one specialized autism unit), and one unit in North Chicago, Illinois.

The Allendale Association is directed by a distinguished board of trustees comprised of 32 men and women representing various races, religions, creeds, and professions. The trustees govern the policies and programs of the Association. They are also responsible for raising private funds to support the capital and operational needs of the Association's programs. The Association is very fortunate to have the support of women's auxiliary groups, as well as the generous support of hundreds of "friends" who financially aid Allendale in providing youth and families with high quality programs and services.

The Outpatient and Stepping Stone programs serve male and female clients and their families. Ninety percent of the clients in our Outpatient program are Caucasian. For the Stepping Stone therapeutic day school program, in FY2023, 51% of the students are African-American, 28% are Caucasian, 13% are Hispanic, and 8% identify as bi-racial or another race. The clients served by Allendale represent suburban, urban and some rural populations and range in pathology from those who are severely disturbed and/or psychotic to those experiencing family conflicts, marital conflicts, personality disorders, conduct disorder, PTSD, depression, anxiety, ADHD, and adjustment problems.

The psychology internship program is a 12-month full-time program in Allendale's Clinical and Community Services department. The internship also includes providing services to the Stepping Stone therapeutic day school program. The internship typically begins about the third week of August.

Clinical and Community Services

Bradley Counseling Center (Outpatient Services):

This program includes a community-based, outpatient counseling center located in Lake Villa, Illinois. Designed to serve troubled children and adolescents, families, and adults, the center employs clinicians and diagnosticians in the fields of psychology, social work, and other allied mental health fields. Individual, group, family, or couple therapy is utilized to provide remediation and relief and to help clients develop more adaptive ways of dealing with personal difficulties. In addition, the counseling center provides anger management services. Comprehensive diagnostic evaluations and psychological assessments are also provided, as well as community consultation and education.

Stepping Stone Therapeutic Day School Program (Part of Allendale's Educational Services)

Stepping Stone is an education treatment alternative provided to youth from the surrounding communities who have serious emotional and behavioral disabilities. The program emphasizes academic, diagnostic, and instructional intervention, clinical consultation, as well as individual and group psychotherapy. These students are not able to be maintained in the special education program of their local school districts due to their emotional and behavioral symptoms, and in particular significant acting-out behaviors such as aggression to self or others. Due to the severity of their behaviors, they require a highly specialized "day only" therapeutic program. This program serves approximately 50 boys and girls from ages 5 to 21. The main source of referrals is the Illinois State Board of Education.

Master's Level Psychotherapy Practicum

The master's level psychotherapy externship is a 12-month, part-time program (20 hours per week) open to MA Clinical or Counseling Students. This includes 7-10 direct service hours per week in the Outpatient and Stepping Stone therapeutic day school programs. The externship program is dedicated to preparing individuals for the practice of clinical psychology and includes year-long involvement within Bradley Counseling Center and, the Stepping Stone therapeutic day school.

Program Philosophy and Objectives

The Allendale Association externship program is dedicated to the thorough training of externs in the areas of diagnosis, intervention, consultation, psychological testing, and supervision opportunities. It offers intensive training and experience with diverse treatment populations and exposes the externs to a variety of treatment modalities, including individual, group, and family therapy, as well as clinical consultation (a core component of the **REStArtSM** model). The externship is predicated on the belief that a competent psychologist must have a knowledge and understanding of clinical psychology that is grounded in theory and research and the ability to apply that knowledge and understanding to a variety of clinical situations.

The program has a strong psychodynamic influence. The emphasis of the training program is to provide training in core therapeutic skills essential to the practice of clinical psychology; to teach

intervention strategies/skills grounded in theory and research; to promote self-examination as a way to understand one's impact on the therapeutic process and the alliance; and to foster the ability to critically examine the efficacy of interventions. The program encourages externs to continually reflect upon the complex relationship among psychological theory, practice, and individual differences, while paying close attention to their own reactions to the client in order to be a self-reflective clinician.

Training Model

Our theorist-practitioner model involves a balance between understanding (conceptualization and theoretical approach) and change (managing the therapeutic alliance and intervening purposely). Theory that is supported by current research is used to generate and test hypotheses about the meaning of a client's behavior based on tracking moment-to-moment session material. Tracking of the process allows the theorist-practitioner to assess the status of the alliance by actively using client feedback to promote a therapeutic relationship. The theorist-practitioner then uses this theory-based understanding within the context of a good working therapeutic alliance to develop interventions designed to effect changes within the client. The effectiveness of these interventions is determined by the degree to which these predicted changes occur following the interventions. An essential component of this model is the ability of the theorist-practitioner to use the "person of the therapist;" that is, to be aware of and to manage his/her own reactions in the therapeutic process in order to maintain this balance between understanding and change.

Training

The REStArTSM Model:

Externs are trained in the Relational Re-Enactment Systems Approach to Treatment (**REStArTSM**) model. Throughout the training, externs receive didactic training regarding the **REStArTSM** model, starting in orientation and continuing through seminars, supervisions, trainings, staffings, meetings, and consultations. This model of treatment was developed as an evidence-based treatment practice built on the four factors for effective residential treatment (having a coherent conceptual therapeutic approach, family involvement during treatment, stability of post-discharge placement, and availability of aftercare support from Wampold and Malterer, 2007). Although the **REStArTSM** model was originally developed for use in our residential program, its components are well-suited for use across our multiple levels of treatment environments including outpatient, therapeutic day school and foster care. The **REStArTSM** model integrates psychodynamic/object relations, systems, neurobiology, trauma and attachment theories (McConnell & Taglione, 2012 and 2016). For further information on this model, please see the **REStArTSM** page of our website (www.allendale4kids.org). Throughout their assignments in Allendale programs, externs are trained in and begin to work within the model of the agency while developing their own approach to treatment.

Orientation:

During the first two weeks of the training year, the externs are oriented to the outpatient and Stepping Stone (as assigned) programs. The goal of orientation is to acclimate each extern to Bradley Counseling Center/Stepping Stone at the professional and interpersonal level. During this period, the externs are introduced to supervisors, seminar instructors, and staff members, and become familiar with the clinical and administrative functioning of the programs, and with the goals

and objectives of each training seminar. Particular emphasis is placed upon the role of the extern in the treatment program. Following the orientation training, the externs begin their assignments.

Outpatient Counseling Center Assignment:

The twelve-month experience at Bradley Counseling Center includes direct service hours in the areas of individual, family, and group (when available) therapy. Clients come to the agency through a variety of referral sources including schools, court system, physicians, EAP providers, DCFS, and insurance providers. The types of clients seen include children, adolescents, and adults who present with a wide range of psychological problems. Externs are assigned primarily to child and adolescent clients who have Medicaid insurance. Clients come from a variety of socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. Due to client availability, the outpatient assignment involves externs usually scheduling some evening hours after 5pm (the Outpatient program is open until 9pm). Each extern is assigned to one primary supervisor for the training year and receives one hour of individual supervision each week. The supervisor is responsible for working with the extern on all aspects of his/her casework, which includes clinical, ethical and legal issues, record keeping, and documentation.

Externs also spend two to four hours per week providing intake services. The primary focus is assessing the client's appropriateness for outpatient services. This involves taking calls from people seeking treatment, identifying the presenting problems, and collecting relevant background information. Externs may also have the opportunity to manage high priority or "crisis" calls during their intake shift (i.e. assessing suicidal/homicidal clients or possible abuse cases to determine the appropriate level of intervention). Externs are assigned an intake supervisor who provides supervision on all intake calls.

Each extern attends case staffings in which the outpatient cases are staffed at admission, discharge, and during the course of treatment. The cases are reviewed by the clinical staff, interns, and practicum students to ensure accuracy of diagnosis, appropriateness of treatment plan, and progress toward stated goals as part of the peer review/file audit of our Quality Improvement (QI) process. The externs participate through case presentations as they take on outpatient cases or if they have a high-priority intake in which they opened a file. Externs also provide feedback to other presenters. Externs become part of the staff rotation for being notetaker after a period of observing the staffings.

Stepping Stone Therapeutic Day School Assignment:

Externs will also be assigned duties in the therapeutic day school program. The extern will be assigned to work with Stepping Stone students or families for therapy. For all Stepping Stone clients, the extern will participate in clinical consultation with the family, which is a service provided with the student's teacher. The extern will also provide feedback regarding treatment goals, progress in therapy, and treatment recommendations for Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings that are held annually. Participants in the IEP meetings include the client, Stepping Stone school staff and administrators, school district representatives, and parents.

Group Therapy Assignment:

In the Stepping Stone program, externs will have the opportunity to work with a classroom teacher to co-lead structured Life Plan and community groups. Externs begin these groups after being oriented to the groups and offered an opportunity to dialogue with the teacher and supervisors

about implementation of the groups. The group work for Stepping Stone groups is supervised by a licensed psychologist and the Director of the Stepping Stone program.

Externs *may* have the opportunity, based on referral availability, to co-lead anger management groups in the outpatient program if available, or to provide the curriculum to clients on an individual basis. The anger management program is based on empirically supported treatments to provide psychoeducation and aid clients in learning specific skills to address anger management problems. Externs are presented with a cognitive-behavioral curriculum for treating individuals with anger management difficulties. This curriculum is based on research regarding empirically supported treatments for anger management as a presenting problem (Deffenbacher, Oetting, & DiGiuseppe, 2002). If anger management program participants are available, this assignment would begin after orientation and after didactics regarding the anger management program are given.

The supervision for the anger management program and the Stepping Stone groups focuses on teaching group intervention skills from a dynamic, interactional and relationally-based perspective, within the **REStArTSM** model.

Training in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:

Externs encounter diversity in many ways across the different program areas. Our program utilizes the construct of “cultural humility” to create a broad lens to reflect on issues of culture. We emphasize as many factors as possible that comprise a client’s cultural make-up so that issues of diversity are always salient and intersect at many points for both the client and the therapist.

Externs also receive didactics regarding diverse populations throughout the year. During orientation, the program offers didactic training regarding diversity issues that relate to the populations served in each of the program areas, particularly regarding the unique cultural challenges in working with clients who present with severe acting out and their families. Additionally, at the beginning of the year, didactics are offered regarding diversity issues in each of the seminars as related to the seminar content. The program also has several external presenters each year who focus their training specifically on diversity topics.

Externs increase their skills in identifying and addressing diversity issues throughout their training experiences. In seminars, externs present cases related to the seminar content, and they are expected to discuss issues of diversity that are being considered in the treatment, as well as how they are addressing these issues. They also receive feedback around this topic from other trainees in these seminars in order to improve their skill in addressing these issues in their work.

The program uses outpatient case staffings for externs, interns and staff to present cases and identify relevant diversity issues so that they can incorporate that understanding into the treatment planning process.

Externs also participate in the annual cultural humility and diversity trainings that are provided to the Stepping Stone program staff. These trainings include both a didactic training regarding the construct of cultural humility, as well as training on applying the principles to work with specific families in the school program.

Additionally, the program devotes professional issues group sessions throughout the year as opportunities for the staff and trainees to present cases in which issues of diversity are particularly salient and to discuss how they are addressing those issues. This offers externs an opportunity to learn from specific case examples and to engage in collegial dialogue regarding experiences working with diverse clients and effective ways of addressing diversity issues.

Training Experiences

In addition to their individual supervision, therapy externs will participate in the following training features (depending on scheduling and availability):

Classifications Seminar :

In this seminar participants will learn the Allendale **REStArTSM** principles. Additionally, components of evidence-based treatment, Jonathan Shedler's (2010) article on the efficacy of psychodynamic therapy (citing several meta-analyses), and neurobiological research supporting some psychodynamic concepts will be reviewed. Didactics will include: a review of "core sensitivities" (Poulson, 2017), Shedler's seven distinctive features of psychodynamic technique, relationship-based therapeutic skills (Norcross and Lambert, 2018) and cultural humility (Hook, et al. 2013). Emphasis will be placed upon diagnosing personality/character structures/classifications; applying specific interventions deemed effective in reducing the intensity and frequency of maladaptive defenses; and providing opportunity for expression of the real self of these personality disorders. Within the framework of a psychodynamic understanding of the structure of the anti-social personality disorder, certain interventions (including some motivational interviewing techniques) to work effectively with this disorder will also be presented. The seminar will begin with a didactic overview of theory and technique. Audiotape presentations from participants will then be used to apply these theoretical approaches and techniques to therapy. Each presenter will present for three consecutive times for the first round of presentations and then three consecutive times for the second round of presentations.

Professional Issues Group:

This meeting is led by the Director of Clinical Training and meets monthly. The interns, post-docs, new staff, externs, director, and supervisors meet for one hour to exchange information regarding training, professional development, and scholarly material related to the field of clinical psychology, including discussion of patient-focused research, outcomes data for Allendale's **REStArTSM** model, diversity related to the population served at Allendale, psychological testing, ethics, self-care, and licensure. Scholarly material related to treatment is discussed in the context of specific cases that supervisors and trainees bring to the group to receive feedback about a specific question.

Continuing Education Presentations:

Allendale offers monthly continuing education programs for psychologists and social workers. The externs attend these presentations throughout the training year. These two or three hour presentations cover a wide range of topics in the field of psychology, including assessment, treatment interventions, supervision, professional conduct and ethics, specialty topics, and cultural and human differences. The majority of the presentations are provided by outside speakers with an expertise in their topic area.

Application Procedure

Eligibility

MA Clinical or Counseling students or MSW students meeting requirements of and approved by school for practicum training.

Application

To complete the application procedure, the following materials are to be submitted to the Director of Clinical Training:

- A letter of interest that addresses the following two questions:
 1. In terms of self-awareness, what have you observed about yourself while doing clinical work with clients that is something you do well; and, also, what is something that you have observed about yourself while doing clinical work with clients that you need to improve on?
 2. In addition to gaining more experience, what are you hoping to gain out of your practicum this year?
- A current curriculum vita
- Two letters of reference from professionals best able to provide information about clinical and professional skills and potential. The two letters of reference do not include the letter of qualification provided by schools for those schools that send letters of qualification.
- Official transcripts from graduate programs

Selection Process

The initial screening process will begin upon receipt of all materials requested on the application form. Following receipt and review of this material, the eligible applicants will be contacted for a personal interview. Offers will be made, based on goodness of fit, as interviews are conducted.

Background Checks and Physical:

The Allendale Association conducts a background check for all incoming employees, trainees and volunteers. Any concerns that are raised within this background check will be discussed with the applicant before action is taken. Fingerprinting is conducted prior to employment in order to obtain DCFS clearance. Fingerprinting and the background check must be initiated at least 5 business days prior to the start of orientation. A pre-employment physical is also required within 30 days of starting at Allendale.

COVID 19:

The Allendale Association follows state and local guidance and requirements. There are no requirements in place at this time.