

Research Assistant Position in Preschool Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience
Laboratory for Child Brain Development
Department of Psychiatry, Washington University – St. Louis
www.jobs.wustl.edu (search Job #51555)

The Laboratory for Child Brain Development (LCBD-PI: Dr. Susan Perlman) currently has an opening for a research assistant to work on three NIH studies of temperament, the parent-child relationship, and biological stress unfolding during early childhood.

The applicant's main appointment will be in the Laboratory for Child Brain Development (LCBD; <http://www.childbrainlab.com>) in the Department of Psychiatry in the Washington University, School of Medicine, William Greenleaf Eliot Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (<https://childpsychiatry.wustl.edu/>). The LCBD is dedicated to using multi-modal methodology to understand the trajectories of emotional development from infancy to middle childhood (with a strong preschool focus). Currently, the LCBD has several ongoing projects including: 1) Biological changes in children experiencing stressful life events; 2) Longitudinal development of preschool irritability as a predictor for psychopathology; 3) Interpersonal brain synchronization in early childhood psychopathology, including autism spectrum disorder; 4) The impact of treatment for disruptive behavior on brain development and; 5) Brain development in preschool children who were born dependent on opioids, in addition to several local and national collaborations. The research assistant will mostly be working on a new study investigating the biological unfolding of stress and how it predicts the onset of psychopathology in 4-6 year-old children. This longitudinal study, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health employs intensive, state-of-the-art, multi-modal, neurodevelopmental measurement including functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), functional near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS), HPA axis measurement (hair and salivary cortisol), and inflammatory markers. The research assistant will also be aiding with data preprocessing and analysis from previously collected studies. Additional, multi-modal studies within the laboratory employ eye tracking, facial expression and behavioral coding, and sleep actigraphy, hair cortisol.

This is an ideal position for a candidate looking to gain research experience before applying to graduate or medical school. The research assistant will be an integral member of this scientific team and will have opportunities to earn authorship on publications and present posters at scientific meetings.

Position requires a bachelor's degree in psychology, neuroscience, engineering or a related field. The ideal candidate will demonstrate interest in child development, strong motivation, work ethic, and organizational skills, and will combine collaborative orientation with the ability to function well independently. Flexibility in scheduling during some weekend and evening hours is required. This position requires experience in a research laboratory environment (whether through previous work experience or during undergraduate studies). Experience with a brain imaging modality (fMRI, EEG, fNIRS) and/or psychophysiology (heart rate, skin conductance, pupillometry) is preferred, along with experience in computer programming languages (R, Matlab, Python). Previous experience with children and families is required. The research assistant will be expected to cooperate fully with the lab's Covid-19 protocol for safe data collection in children.

This start date of this position will be on or after July 19th, 2021. Applicants who intend to spend a minimum of 2 years in the position will be preferred. There is a possibility of extending the position pending future funding and progress. Applicants will be considered until the position is filled. Please highlight relevant experience in your cover letter. Questions regarding the position should be directed to Dr. Perlman at perlmansusan@wustl.edu.