



**Job Title:** Research Assistant

**Position Classification:** Project Assistant

**Job Description:**

**POSITION SUMMARY:**

The Centre for Infant Cognition at the University of British Columbia is a psychology research lab interested in the development of the human mind. The laboratory is seeking an undergraduate student to join our research team as a project assistant. The undergraduate student will work closely with the faculty member and graduate students to contribute to a longitudinal study examining the relationship between infant behaviors and preschool social functioning.

Previous research in our laboratory has shown that the fundamental aspects of moral understanding and evaluation are present in early infancy. It remains unclear, however, whether infants' behaviors in socio-moral evaluation studies reflect individual differences in underlying cognitive or social competence. The current project examines the relationships between infants' behaviors in sociomoral evaluation studies and their future cognitive and social competence.

**DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:**

- Identify preschoolers who are eligible for the project from research database
- Send out parent-reported questionnaires to measure preschool functioning
- Contact participants and schedule appointments
- Follow up with scheduling and make confirmation calls
- Set up experimental equipment according to prescribed protocols
- Administer behavioral tests to measure preschoolers' social functioning
- Enter data into research database according to established protocols
- Assist with validating and cleaning of data
- Assist with data analysis. Opportunity to develop skills in SPSS

These duties and responsibilities will be performed under the direct supervision of the principal investigator and senior lab staff. The student will attend lab meetings to ensure effective communication. In addition, the student will engage in regular meetings with graduate students to receive feedback about their work and ensure optimal performance is being achieved. The student will be encouraged to ask questions and suggest ways in which their learning experience could be improved. The tasks will require a strong commitment in time and effort as well as extensive practice in varying settings. The tasks also require the student to apply previously learned knowledge in different contexts. This role will provide plenty of opportunities for the student to work closely with researchers, interact with people from different backgrounds, build connections, and develop professional, social, and communication skills. The job will also help the student cultivate a sense of responsibility, self-knowledge, and self-confidence, and strengthen his/her sense of connection to the university.

**Qualifications:**

- An undergraduate student enrolled in a UBC psychology or life science program
- Must be able to work up to 10 hours/week and can work on weekends
- Previous experience in psychology research preferred
- Previous experience with preverbal infants and preschoolers required
- Excellent interpersonal skills. Ability to deal with a diversity of people in a calm, courteous, and effective manner
- Excellent oral and written communication skills



- Excellent organization and time management skills
- High level of accuracy and attention to detail
- Experience with databases (e.g. FileMaker Pro)
- Knowledge of Microsoft Excel, jHab, and Observer
- Completion of the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS 2) on-line tutorial
- Be familiar with infant/child research scheduling protocol

### **Student Learning Components:**

#### Orientation & Training:

- An orientation to the lab and an overview of developmental psychology research
- introductions to the principal investigator, graduate students, and research assistants at the Centre for Infant Cognition
- Introductions to UBC Early Development Research Group
- Provided a lab manual with tasks/duties detailed
- Review of lab policies, protocols and procedures
- Job specific orientation and training as required for the project. Introductions to past and on-going research projects in the lab
- In-person training from the principal investigator, graduate students, and lab manager

#### Feedback, Ongoing Support & Reflection:

- The supervisor and other staff are always available to offer assistance and answer questions
- Continuous positive feedback and transparent, open communication
- Specific feedback provided after completing daily tasks
- Ongoing support given to gain the skills required to work in a positive team environment
- Frequent opportunity for reflection through positive feedback and open communication

#### Mentorship, Encouragement, Support, and Networking Opportunities:

- One-on-one mentorship offered by the principal investigator, graduate students, and lab manager
- The student will be supported by lab managers and peer research assistants
- Participation in UBC Early Development Research Group networking events held at various times throughout the year
- Opportunity to connect and chat with other undergraduate and graduate students working at the Centre for Infant Cognition
- Attending various recruitment events within and outside of UBC
- Intercultural communication and awareness

#### Personal, Professional & Academic Development:

- The student will be encouraged to provide new ideas and introduce efficiencies to research paradigms and procedures. In this process, the student will gain insight into experiment design and research administration.
- The student will contact families to schedule research appointments and collect survey questionnaires. In this process, the student will develop strong communication, organization, and time management skills.
- In the lab, the student will conduct various psychological tests to assess participants' cognitive and social competence. In this process, the student will learn to transition knowledge from theory into real world practice, and gain experience with infants, preschoolers, and parents.
- After the data collection, the student will be responsible for data entry, and will assist with data cleaning and data analysis. In this process, the student will gain a lot of hands-on experience with research tools such as E-Prime, SPSS, jHab, and Observer.
- The student will also be responsible for training new research assistants and organizing workshops. In this process, the student will develop leadership, management, and networking skills.