



Noora Hamdan

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Hello,

I am pleased to be applying for the position of Truancy case manager at CORA. I am currently a sixth-year doctoral student (ABD) in the Psychology Department at Temple University, in the final stages of completing my dissertation. In my time as a graduate student at Temple, I have developed a deep interest in working with children, families, and communities in promoting understanding of the factors that encompass healthy child development, and family and community well-being. Below I detail my graduate experiences at George Mason University and Temple University, how I have come to develop an interest in working with families and the community, and why I believe I will fit in well and contribute positively to the CORA community and its mission.

When beginning my graduate career in Applied Developmental Psychology in the fall of 2011 at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA, I knew I was interested in understanding more about what influences healthy child development and how to build resiliency in children who are in stressful home and family dynamics. I was involved in the Teachers as Socializers of Socio-Emotional Learning project (TASSEL) and the Development in School Contexts lab. During this time, I learned to observe teacher and parent-child interactions, code parent, teacher and child affect, and assess levels of socio-emotional support provided by teachers and parents to children. I was also able to work with parents and children with occupational and behavioral difficulties to help promote more openness and understanding in the home and conflict avoidance and resolution strategies. For my thesis, I investigated the role of the stability of socio-emotional support provided by early elementary teachers in facilitating a healthy classroom environment for young children. For this, I utilized autoregressive moving average statistical analysis to assess micro (minute to minute) changes in teachers' socio-emotional support. I found that while low levels of socio-emotional support provided by teachers is harmful to children's mental well-being in the classroom,

stability of socio-emotional support, regardless of quality, was most critical for children's overall healthy adaptive classroom experience.

During my time at Temple, I have continued to study how parents can influence their children's development, focusing on how parents influence their children's beliefs about themselves (self-concept, self-esteem), and the struggles faced by children of substance abusing parents while also considering how some of these children can build remarkable resiliency. It has been my greatest honor to work with children who have already overcome so many challenges in their young lives and to watch them face the world with great courage and optimism. The title of my dissertation is "Building resilience in children of substance abusing and psychiatrically disturbed fathers: A longitudinal study of the protective function of school positivity, peer acceptance and friendship against internalizing and externalizing problems and academic struggles". My hope is that my dissertation will help to advance the currently limited knowledge we have regarding fathers' unique role in shaping children's development over time, the struggles faced by children of substance abusing fathers over the course of their development, and how we can psychiatrically intervene to help these children to build resilience in the face of these difficult life realities.

It would be my privilege to be a part of CORA. I am eager to work towards advancing CORA's mission of helping to advance the wellbeing of children and families and to assist them in thriving in their school and greater community.

Thank you for your consideration,

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