



# 2022

## MID-YEAR IMPACT REPORT



Child Trauma  
Research Centre  
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

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# WELCOME!

Dear Reader,

Thank you for your interest in the Child Trauma Research Centre (CTRC). Since its establishment in March 2020, the CTRC has worked tirelessly to build and grow its network, secure research funding, execute leading-edge research, and undertake important, useful, and creative knowledge dissemination all with the goal of supporting children and those entrusted with their care.

This mid-year report can be read as an addendum to the 2021 Impact Report. It highlights, what has been a period of significant growth, of which we are exceptionally proud.

We look forward to continuing to grow and continuing to do leading-edge research. Exciting projects that have begun this year include:

- inquiring into the impacts of climate trauma on children and youth;
- supporting public safety personnel families with an ecosystem of trauma-informed supports and resources;
- inquiring into the impacts of culturally relevant food security on the health and wellbeing of refugee and newcomer children and families,
- creating a microcredential in trauma-informed/sensitive pedagogies and practices which will become publicly available to all those who support children and youth across Canada

I also feel extremely privileged to serve my community by sitting at the leadership table for the City of Regina & Tamarack Institute's Communities Building Youth Futures initiative, as a Board Member on the City of Regina's Community Safety and Wellbeing municipal corporation, and as a research partner for the Saskatchewan Roughriders Foundation.

We thank everyone who has supported our work and our growth, and look forward to the exciting things ahead.

Be well, stay well, become well,  
Nathalie



**Dr Nathalie Reid**

Director  
Child Trauma Research Centre  
(CTRC)



Thus far, 2022 has seen exponential growth for the CTRC. Here are some highlights:

### Personnel

- Establishment of the CTRC's 3-year Research Chair
- First Post-Doctoral Fellow
- UR Candidate for Banting Post-Doctoral Scholar
- 1st CTRC Research Fellow
- CTRC Research Coordinator
- First and second CTRC Internship students

### Projects & Funding Secured

- \$7.3M in research funding (PHAC, SHRF, MHRC, CIHR, SSHRC)
- 10 projects - 6 new; 4 ongoing

### Upcoming Projects

- CIHR Catalyst Grant: Integrated Care (Policy Research for Health System Transformation)
- SHRF Solutions Innovation Grant to develop a research project that provides virtual province-wide support to family members/friends affected by substance use
- Core team for a Canada Excellence Research Chair application in Youth Mental Health Assessment
- Expanding Community Arts-Based Trauma-Informed Workshops for Youth
- Supporting Growing Young Movers Before and After School Care Program with trauma-informed training and kits

### Expanding Networks

- CIPSRT, PSPNET, & Families Matter Research Group
- SK Roughrider Foundation
- Communities Building Youth Futures
- Community Safety and Wellbeing Municipal Corporation
- AVA National Health Research Training Centre
- Red Cross Canada

# WHAT WE'VE DONE SO FAR THIS YEAR

2022

## A Detailed Overview of the CTRC's Research Funding

**\$2,075,000 Public Health Agency of Canada** - Co-Principal Investigator: Developing An Ecosystem of Resources and Supports for Public Safety Personnel Families. 2022 - 2023

**\$2,400,000 CIHR** - Health Research Training Platform Pilot - Co-Applicant: Alliance Against Violence and Adversity (AVA): Health and Social Services Research Training Platform for System and Population Transformations in Girls and Women's Health. 2022-2028

**\$2,500,000 SSHRC Partnership Grant** - Co-Applicant: Canadian Consortium on Child and Youth Trauma. 2020-2027

**\$65,000 Mental Health Research Canada/ Saskatchewan Mental Health Impact Grant** - Co-Applicant: Take Up Space: You Matter! Fostering (re)Connection After the Pandemic Through Trauma-Informed Community Arts Programming. 2022-2023

**\$9,960 Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation Truth and Action Research Connections Grant** - Principal Investigator: Shaping a Facilitator Community to Create a Micro-credential in Trauma-Informed Pedagogies and Practices. 2022-2023

**\$11,092 Ministry of Education, Government of Saskatchewan** - Principal Investigator: Conducting a Pan-Canadian Knowledge Synthesis of Trauma-Informed Best Practices in Education, Contract. 2022

**\$7,500 Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation Research Connections Grant** - Principal Investigator: Neuroscience Infused Play, Art, and Narrative (Re)Connection Kits. 2021-2023

**\$215,000 Communities Building Youth Futures** - member of the leadership table; YMCA and Tamarack Institute.

Dr. Reid is currently co-authoring applications for a CIHR Catalyst Grant entitled *Cross-sectoral collaboration to improve outcomes for children/youth in vulnerable contexts*, a SHRF Solutions Innovation Grant to provide virtual province-wide digital support to family members/friends affected by substance use, and a SSHRC Knowledge Synthesis Grant: *Shifting Dynamics of Privilege and Marginalization* as a Principal Investigator.

\*research funding does not cover operational costs

# WHERE WE ARE

## 2022

### A Detailed Overview of the CTRC's New Projects

#### **PSPNET Families**

The project seeks to develop and offer virtual evidence-based and trauma-informed wellbeing hub, by offering mental health resources as well as a self-guided internet cognitive behavioural therapy wellbeing course to support public safety personnel families. The platform will be called PSPNET Families. Co-principal investigators are: Dr. Nathalie Reid, Dr. Heather Hadjistavropoulos (University of Regina), and Dr. Heidi Cramm (Queen's University) [www.pspnetfamilies.ca](http://www.pspnetfamilies.ca) launched December 6, 2022.

#### **Take Up Space! You Matter!**

The project seeks to research the impacts of trauma-informed arts-based engagements in dance, music, and skateboarding on youth mental health and wellbeing. This project responds directly to the effects of isolation and anxiety youth have been experiencing during COVID-19 through trauma-sensitive engagements, which will be shaped to increase self-regulation and build healthy relationships.

#### **Developing a Microcredential in Trauma-Sensitive Pedagogies/Practices**

This project aims to translate and mobilize Indigenous and non-Indigenous trauma-informed/sensitive knowledge and experience in a creative and accessible way with practical implications to support the mental health of students and educators in the province of Saskatchewan. The microcredential will be piloted in Winter 2023.

#### **Communities Building Youth Futures**

Communities Building Youth Futures is a pan-Canadian project to develop collective impact and system-wide solutions for youth as they build and act upon plans for their future. A primary goal is engaging youth aged 15 to 30 facing barriers to education and employment to develop strategies that remove barriers, and that enable young people to be engaged in their communities and successfully navigate transitions from youth to adulthood.

#### **Exploring the optimal conditions for implementing a trauma-focused prenatal group program in Saskatchewan: Interrupting the intergenerational cycle of trauma**

CTRC's new research chair was awarded a SHRF Establishment Grant to uncover the necessary conditions to successfully implement a trauma-focused prenatal prevention program in Saskatchewan to support expectant parents who experienced childhood trauma,

# WHERE WE ARE

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2022

## A Detailed Overview of the CTRC's New Projects

### **Program Evaluation, SK Roughriders Foundation, Win with Wellness**

In 2022, the SK Roughriders Foundation will launch its mental well-being program in schools across the province. The CTRC has agreed to support this initiative in a research capacity through program evaluation.

### **Supporting Before and After School Programs through trauma-informed arts-based connection kits**

This project is in its inceptive/conceptual phase. The project aims to draw on previous CTRC research in relation to neuroscience-infused play, art, and narrative resilience-supportive connection kits, to develop and propose a similar undertaking for Growing Young Movers' programming.

### **Climate Trauma -**

This project responds to past, current, and future ecological crises with an eye to understanding the impacts of these, and impending crises, on children and youth's perceptions of, and engagements with, their world. Intersecting ecological education with emotional experiences of teachers and students, this study atypically weaves climate change education with mental health scholarship. It will contribute to: nuancing climate hope alongside other emotional experiences; future curriculum and policy development; teacher education programming; in-service teachers' pedagogical practices; and, informing the ways in which teachers and schools shape multigenerational responses to climate change crises.

**Refugee and Newcomer Children, Youth, and Families** - Dr. Hang Tran, the CTRC's first-ever post-doctoral scholar is undertaking leading research that seeks to better understand the impacts of culturally relevant food offerings on the mental health and wellbeing of refugee and newcomer children, youth, and families. In tandem, Dr. Tran is working alongside many non-for-profits, and the Ministry of Education, to support the experiences of English as an Additional Language Specialists in Saskatchewan.

# WHERE WE ARE

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2022

## A Detailed Overview of the CTRC's Ongoing Projects

### **Alliance Against Violence and Adversity (AVA): Health and Social Services Research Training Platform for System and Population Transformations in Girls' and Women's Health**

With a network of over 150 collaborators, this project seeks to build a training platform for researchers, frontline workers, and service providers alike to support systems-level transformations in population health and wellbeing.

### **Canadian Consortium on Child and Youth Trauma**

Is a partnership that began in 2020. It seeks to bring together researchers, practitioners, clinicians, and policymakers in Canada to unify, enhance, and develop best practices in relation with child and youth trauma in Canada.

### **Mental Health Attendance Policy**

A student-lead project aimed at reshaping attendance policies in order to acknowledge mental health as an excusable absence. Developed with the intention of being able to proactively track students and schools who might require intervention, this project seeks to shape mental wellbeing spaces in schools supportive of children and youth.

### **Understanding the Emotional Impacts of COVID-19 on Teachers, Administrators, and Professional School Staff**

Begun during the pandemic, this project draws on photo-elicitation to better understand the emotional experiences of educators in schools. This project is currently in the knowledge dissemination phase with 2 conference presentations, and a book proposal in development

### **The Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies, the Nonprofit Voluntary Sector Studies Network, and the Settlement Workers in Schools**

Working to develop ways to best support refugee and newcomer families, as well as those supporting them in schools.

### **Working with Saskatchewan Agencies**

These include the Ministry of Education, Student Supports, the Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth, Youth Mental Health Sharing & Learning Community, the Special Advisor to Saskatchewan's Children and Youth Strategy, Ministry of Health

# PERSONNEL GROWTH

2022

## Research Chair - Dr. Lise Milne

Dr. Milne joined the University of Regina as an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Social Work (FSW) in 2018. For a decade prior, while completing her PhD at McGill University, she worked in the research-rich environment of the McGill Centre for Research on Children and Families as a project manager for multiple small- and large-scale university-community partnership projects. In her current role at the University of Regina, Dr. Milne has taken on leadership roles, been a participant on several academic committees at multiple levels, and contributed to the broader Saskatchewan and Canadian communities.

Dr. Milne's area of research focuses primarily on enhancing resilience to mediate the impacts of exposure to childhood traumatic experiences, including neurobiological impacts. Her work includes supporting child-serving organizations and staff who are often challenged to implement and evaluate effective interventions critical to children's wellbeing. In addition, Dr. Milne has made concerted efforts to form connections in Saskatchewan in a variety of contexts, with a view to developing meaningful, multi-disciplinary collaborations.

In this 3-year Research Chair term, Dr. Milne aims to develop a prevention and intervention program of research that brings benefit to children, youth, and their families within communities across Saskatchewan with regards to their mental health and wellbeing, with a particular focus on the neurodevelopmental risks for infants born to parents who themselves experienced childhood trauma.



**Dr Lise Milne**  
Research Chair, Child  
Trauma Research  
Centre (CTRC),  
University of Regina

# PERSONNEL GROWTH

2022

## Post-Doctoral Scholar - Dr. Hang Tran

Dr Hang Thi Thuy Tran joins the Child Trauma Research Centre as a Post Doctoral Scholar. Her area of focus will be understanding the mental health impacts of culturally relevant food offerings for refugee and newcomer families, children, and youth.

Dr Hang Thi Thuy Tran has worked in multiple areas: a lecturer, a researcher, a community facilitator, an interpreter, and a cultural broker. She completed her PhD in Elementary Education at the University of Alberta, Canada in 2021. Her doctoral dissertation entitled "Narrative Inquiry into the Experiences of Vietnamese Children and Mothers Composing Lives in Transition to Canada" received the 2022 Canadian Association for Teacher Education (CATE) Recognition Award for Theses and Dissertations on Teacher Education.

Her study highlights the importance of cultural ethics in doing research and everyday life-making, the "world"-traveling to better understand the experiences of newcomer children and families and their contribution to Canadian education and culture, and making kin with multispecies' flourishing as significant in the children's familial curriculum-making and school curriculum-making worlds. Dr Tran has a wide range of research interests including newcomer children and families, familial curriculum-making, cultural brokering, teacher education, and narrative inquiry.



**Dr Hang Tran**

Post Doctoral Scholar,  
Child Trauma Research  
Centre (CTRC),  
University of Regina

# PERSONNEL GROWTH

2022

## **Banting Post Doctoral Fellow Candidate - Dr. Audrey Aamodt**

Dr. Audrey Aamodt has been selected through an internal competitive process to be the University of Regina's candidate for the Banting Post Doctoral Fellowship competition. Her work builds on a funded pilot to inquire into how the climate crisis is being taken up in schools. How extreme weather events are experienced, including associated displacement creates trauma. Additionally, how the information about these events is taken up in schools can also shape trauma for Canadian children and youth who can no longer imagine a future, and through trauma-layering or retraumatization for young people who have relocated to Canadian schools as a result of ecological crises.

Equally, the stories of inevitability and hopelessness that are being shaped by how the climate crisis is being portrayed in the media (e.g. a misery map of climate disasters) and taught in schools are affecting young people's mental health. Gislason et. al. (2021) argue: "children and youth are showing increasing levels of mental health distress due to the climate crisis, characterized by feelings of sadness, guilt, changes in sleep and appetite, difficulty concentrating, solastalgia, and disconnection from the land" (p. 1); yet the impacts of climate change on child and youth mental health are still largely underexplored. Evidence of this hopelessness can be seen in the increasing prevalence of young people citing the climate crisis as shaping their decisions in relation with reproduction, education, employment, etc. (New York Times; cnbc.com). As one young person succinctly stated: "What's the point of having an education if we're not going to have a future?" (Rolling Stone, 2020). This research is timely and holds the potential to have both immediate and long-term mental and ecological health impacts not only in education but across disciplines and sectors for children and youth.



### **Dr Audrey Aamodt**

Banting Post Doctoral  
Scholar Candidate  
Lecturer, Faculty of  
Education

# PERSONNEL GROWTH

2022

## CTRC Research Coordinator -Sam Houston

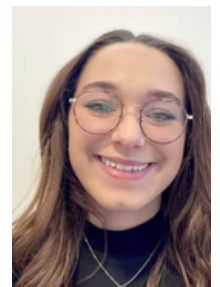
Sam Houston obtained a Bachelor of Arts with a major in economics and Society from the University of Regina. With a background in the public sector, Sam obtained hands-on experience working directly with communities in vulnerable contexts. He hopes to utilize his research and analytic skills to support and strengthen communities in vulnerable contexts, specifically children and those entrusted with their care.



**Sam Houston,**  
CTRC Research  
Coordinator

## CTRC Intern & Research Assistants

**Intern:** Grace Hawkins is currently an undergraduate psychology student at the University of Regina. She has an interest in trauma and grief in children and youth. In the future, Grace hopes to conduct research in this area as well as become a practitioner to provide services to those who have experienced trauma and loss. She also works for the YMCA of Regina and has a passion for working with children.

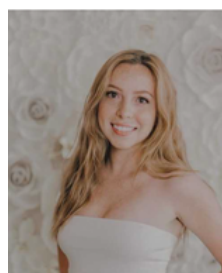


**Grace Hawkins**

**Research Assistants:** While the CTRC has boasted 12 research assistants in the past 2.5 years, currently we are proud to be supporting 3, who are working tirelessly on the PHAC PSPNET Families project, and on data analysis. These research assistants are: Baily Hammer (BA Psychology); Steffi Oberthier (BA Psychology); and Anna Dollimount (MA Psychology).



**Bailey Hammer**



**Steffi Oberthier**

# PERSONNEL GROWTH

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2022

## **CTRC Research Fellowship - Dr. Michael Dubnewick (in progress)**

Dr Dubnewick's research program is broadly interested in community development in recreation, sport, and leisure; Wellness-based programming with Indigenous communities and youth; Relational ethics of research and professional practice; Narrative inquiry and qualitative research.

His passion for community-based research led to his current relationship with the Growing Young Movers (GYM) Youth Development as a Research Associate (@gymovers). His ongoing research with GYM narratively inquires into the experiences of Indigenous youth as they compose their lives as wellness leaders.

Dr. Dubnewick will join the CTRC as a research fellow in November 2022. His work aligns seamlessly with the CTRC's commitment to supporting youth wellbeing. His commitments to relational ethics, to how movement is essential to wellness, and to creative, arts-based knowledge translation/dissemination practices will enhance and grow the CTRC.



**Dr Michael  
Dubnewick**

Assistant Professor,  
Faculty of Kinesiology  
and Health Studies

# PERSONNEL GROWTH

2022

## CTRC Research Assistants and Future Hires

### Research Assistants & Internships

2022 has seen the CTRC hire 2 undergraduate research assistants and one intern (Community Engagement and Research Centre). These students are being offered high-quality research experiences and training. It is a foundational commitment that with each new project the CTRC hires student research assistants to support their academic and research growth. As such, we project hiring at minimum 2 more research assistants in 2022

Additionally, through the PSPNET Families project, the CTRC has worked with 10 additional research assistants through PSPNET, the Families Matter Research Group, and Queen's university.

### Future Hires

In 2022, the CTRC will hire a research coordinator who will support each of the projects undertaken, who will coordinate research teams and budgets, will seek to grow our network of cross-sectoral stakeholders. This person will bridge the operational and research requirements of the CTRC's undertaking. Ultimately the CTRC intends to hire a Development Officer/Grant Specialist, a Community Engagement Officer, an administrative assistant, an Indigenous consultant, and a Community Program Evaluator. The CTRC will also continue to hire Co-Op students to facilitate communications.



# OUR CONTACTS

## **Dr Nathalie Reid**

Director

Child Trauma Research Centre

University of Regina

E-mail: [Nathalie.Reid@uregina.ca](mailto:Nathalie.Reid@uregina.ca)

Phone: 306.737.6415 (cell) 306.585.4543 (office)

## **Dr Chris Yost**

Vice President (Research)

University of Regina

E-mail: [Chris.Yostt@uregina.ca](mailto:Chris.Yostt@uregina.ca)

Phone: 306-585-5184

## **Development Office**

University of Regina

Phone: 306-585-5432



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