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*Jessica Lougheed*



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## **Queen's Psychology Graduate Jessica Lougheed, PhD receives Banting Fellowship**

Congratulations to Queen's Psychology alumna **Jessica Lougheed**, PhD on receiving a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Banting Fellowship for her research entitled, Parent-Child Dynamics in Infancy and Early Childhood: Bridging the Theory-Method Gap.

As a graduate student at Queen's, Jessica studied emotion dynamics in parent-child interactions, and how they relate to psychosocial adjustment. According to Jessica, "How parents and children react to each other emotionally in real time is very important for long term well being—through interactions with their parents, children and youth develop a broad range of skills such as how to manage their emotions and respond to different kinds of situations". Jessica focused specifically on mother-daughter relationships in adolescence for her PhD research because surprisingly little is known about how emotions unfold moment-to-moment between parents and teens, and because the mother-daughter relationship specifically is one of the most emotionally-intense parent-child relationships across the lifespan.

Jessica conducted her PhD research in Dr. Tom Hollenstein's Adolescent Dynamics Lab. "The Adolescent Dynamics Lab at Queen's is a collaborative and rich training environment," she recalls. "The work in the ADL very often involves adopting new methods and pushing forward innovative ideas. To me, that was one of the most challenging—and rewarding— aspects of working in this lab. Dr. Tom Hollenstein has created an environment where students are only limited by the stretches of their imagination."

"I am extremely proud of, though not surprised about, Jessica's success," Tom Hollenstein says. "Her achievements are the result of her deep intellect and methodological skills – she really knew how to make the most of the high-quality training in Queen's Psychology Developmental Program. Building on her cutting-edge research here at Queen's, she is now accelerating her training experience in the best possible environment for her research goals. I am delighted to call Jess my colleague."

Looking forward, the Banting Fellowship will enable Jessica to work at the Pennsylvania State University with two mentors who are leading experts in their fields. Dr. Pamela Cole is an expert in child development and emotion regulation, and Dr. Nilam Ram is an expert in quantitative methods and lifespan development. "Working with these mentors at Penn State will allow me to broaden my expertise in developmental psychology to early childhood, and also to gain more experience with quantitative methods," Jessica says.

One of Jessica's current projects is a series of methods papers geared towards developmental researchers that make some of these advanced statistical techniques more accessible to researchers who might not otherwise learn about them. "One current challenge in research in psychology is the gap between theory and methods," Jessica explains. "Advances in statistical techniques do not always get picked up by the research community more broadly, even though many of these methods would enable researchers to directly test their theoretically-driven research questions."

Jessica is also excited for the opportunity to be involved in a project that will make major contributions to the study of self-regulation (delaying gratification, resisting impulses) in early childhood. "My mentors have developed a theoretical model of self-regulation that unifies the many processes that occur, such as behaviour, emotion, psychophysiology, and parental scaffolding, in the moments when children experience situations that challenge their ability to self-regulate."

Jessica's long-term career goals involve establishing her own research lab as a professor to continue her studies of emotion dynamics in early childhood and adolescence. Her Banting-funded work at Penn State is setting her up for success by providing her with opportunities to deepen her quantitative skill set, broaden her developmental expertise, and establish a strong network of collaborators early in her research career. "I am honoured to be a Banting post-doctoral fellow", Jessica concludes. "This award recognizes the importance of emotions in early childhood development, and it allows me to receive world-class research training." The Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships Program aims to attract and retain top-tier postdoctoral talent, both nationally and internationally, to develop their leadership potential and to position them for success as research leaders of tomorrow, positively contributing to Canada's economic, social and research-based growth through a research-intensive career.

See more on the [SSHRC website](#).