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Emily Padgett, M.A



Emily Padgett, M.A. graduated from North Central College in Naperville, Illinois with a bachelor's degree in psychology and Spanish. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Northern Illinois University (NIU) with a specialization in working with children and families. Emily has been fortunate to work with children, families, and adults across multiple clinical settings, including clinical practice at the Psychological Services at NIU, Joliet Public School District #86, a community mental health center providing multidisciplinary comprehensive evaluations for autism spectrum disorder, and a local private practice. At these sites

she had the opportunity to conduct individual therapy, multiple neuropsychological assessments for children and adolescents, and work as a leader for group therapy sessions for children ages 6-17, providing empirically-supported interventions to children coping with a variety of difficulties. This summer, Emily will begin an externship at Advanced Therapeutic Solutions! Emily was a counselor for Adventure Camp (AC) 2015 and 2016 and a Classroom Facilitator for AC 2017. Emily looks forward to helping children and families impacted by selective mutism.

How do you plan to integrate this experience into your educational and professional goals?

Part of my passion as a doctoral student clinician is learning as much as possible and receiving training in as many areas as I can. I believe the training I have received and the experiences I have gained at Adventure Camp helped me become a more patient and understanding clinician. My experiences have also given me a lot more information on selective mutism, which is particularly valuable given the field's limited knowledge of selective mutism!

How has your experience as a counselor at Adventure Camp motivated you to pursue a Ph.D. in clinical psychology?

I actually wanted to pursue a Ph.D. in clinical psychology before I became an Adventure Camp counselor but working at Adventure Camp has only solidified my desire to work in this field and given me more drive to work with kids with selective mutism in the future.

What's your favorite part of Adventure Camp? Do you have a favorite memory from Adventure Camp?

I love everything about Adventure Camp. The counselors, staff, kids, and parents are all phenomenal! One of my favorite memories is from my first year as an Adventure Camp counselor. I had no idea what to expect, and I had so much fun trying to increase the vocal volume of one of my campers. I remember starting off standing right next to my camper to ask a question, and I continued to move farther and farther away from the camper until I was halfway down the hall asking the camper to answer my question! The best part was I could hear the camper from so far away!

What do you think people should know about selective mutism?

It is so important to be informed about mental health in general and specific disorders like selective mutism, especially given the lack of awareness about selective mutism that exists across professions. It's important for everyone to understand how impactful selective mutism is on all aspects of a child's and family's lives. It can influence family relationships, school functioning, peer relationships, development, and much more. However, it's also important to keep in mind that selective mutism is treatable! With hard work and a lot of fun, kids can make great improvements at Adventure Camp!

If you could talk to your camper right now, what would you tell him/her?

We're all nervous for Adventure Camp to begin, but in our fear, we can find our brave! Let's use our brave and have a great time at Adventure Camp 2018!