

This funding initiative is supported by the BC Children's Hospital Foundation.

The BC Children's Hospital Research Institute (BCCHR) **Rising Scholars Undergraduate Summer Studentship** is dedicated to creating more inclusive opportunities in child health research. This program provides funding and hands-on research experience to undergraduate students from equity-denied communities who may not otherwise have the means or access to participate in summer research placements.

Program Overview: This 8-week summer studentships aims to support the next generation of researchers who are passionate about making an impact in the field of child health. This program includes:

- **Funding:** A salary stipend as well as support for travel and living expenses in Vancouver, BC from Monday, June 1, 2026 to Friday, July 31, 2026
- **Research Experience:** Direct involvement in an assigned research project focused on advancing child health research (See Appendix #1 for research project placement details)
- **Professional Development:** Access to skill-building workshops, networking, special events and other resources aimed at building research and leadership skills
- **Mentorship:** Guidance from world-class researchers in the field of child health

No previous research experience is required. All necessary training will be provided. Access to mental health and wellness supports, along with opportunities to connect with and build community with fellow students, will also be available.

Eligibility Criteria: To be eligible to apply for funding you must:

- Self-identify as a member of an equity-denied community that have faced collective barriers in accessing opportunities and resources
- Demonstrate the necessity for need-based funding to access the training and resources necessary to achieve your educational goals
- Be a registered resident of BC or the Yukon who—when not attending university—would typically be living outside the Greater Vancouver/Fraser Valley region during summer months
- Be a current undergraduate student at a Canadian or international post-secondary institution at the time of application (*Grade 12 students beginning post-secondary school in Fall 2026 are not eligible*)
- Be a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or international student with a valid Social Insurance Number (SIN) issued from Service Canada and eligible to work in Canada
- Be available to live in Vancouver and work full-time from June 1 to July 31, 2026
- Show an interest in pursuing a career related to child health research

Applicants may apply to EITHER the [BCCHR Summer Studentship](#) OR the Rising Scholars Undergraduate Summer Studentship. Those who apply for the Rising Scholars Undergraduate Summer Studentship may not also submit an application for the [BCCHR Summer Studentship](#).

Funding: Two (2) Rising Scholars Undergraduate Summer Studentships will be available from Monday, June 1, 2026 to Friday, July 31, 2026. Award funding includes:

- **Student Stipend** – \$6,000 to be paid via UBC payroll every 2 weeks for 8 weeks of full-time work
- **Travel Allowance** – Funding to travel from your current BC or Yukon residence to Vancouver (i.e., plane ticket, gas allowance, ferry, etc.)
- **Housing** – 8 weeks of summer residency at UBC in a private room
Please note, BCCHR is approximately a 45–60 minute bus ride from residency at UBC, daily commuting by public transit or other means will be required (which will be covered by the student stipend)

Assessment & Selection Process: All eligible applications will be reviewed by a committee of BCCHR community members. Committee members represent diverse backgrounds, with intentional representation from equity-denied and under-represented groups. Committee members have lived experience, cultural awareness, and a shared dedication to creating more accessible and inclusive opportunities in academia for the next generation of health scientists.

Funding will be awarded to two (2) top-ranking applicants. *Priority for one of the two Rising Scholars positions will be given to a student who self-identifies as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis.*

Criteria for Evaluation: Eligible applications will be evaluated based on the below criteria.

- **Interest in Child Health Research:** Demonstrated passion and motivation to contribute meaningfully to child health
- **Training Benefits:** Potential to gain new research skills and knowledge; clear connection to future academic and career goals
- **Lived Experience:** Thoughtful reflection on personal background, lived experiences, and any barriers faced accessing summer research placements.

Academic merit is not considered as part of the evaluation process.

Submitting Your Application: Applications must be submitted online at <https://bcchr.slideroom.com>.
A complete application includes:

Applicant Information	Name, pronouns (optional), email, address of BC or Yukon residence, university, academic program, and year of study.
Personal Statement <i>Up to 5000 Characters</i>	Describe the following, (1) which equity-denied group you self-identify with, (2) what experiences have shaped who you are today and how these have influenced your academic goals (this can include personal, academic, community, or lived experiences that reflect your values, interests, or commitment to learning), and (3) barriers you face accessing the training and resources necessary to achieve your educational goals.
Research Interests <i>Up to 2500 Characters</i>	Describe what interests you most about working in child health research?
Training Expectations <i>Up to 2500 Characters</i>	How do you think this studentship opportunity will contribute to your long-term personal, academic and/or career goals?
Accommodations	Are there any supports and/or accommodations that would help you succeed during the studentship?
Preferred Project Placement	Refer to Appendix #1 for details on research project placements. <i>Please note that placement on a specific project is not guaranteed.</i>
Attachments	Resume or CCV (any format)
	Reference Letter #1: A letter of reference from an individual in an academic or educational setting who can speak to your character, motivation, and potential to benefit from this research opportunity. This may include—but isn’t limited to—a professor, program advisor, teaching assistant, high school teacher, coach, or team leader. <i>The reference should be no longer than one page. The applicant may email this to resinfo@bcchr.ca or upload it as part of their application.</i>
	Reference Letter #2: A letter of reference from someone who can provide an objective assessment of your character, motivation, and potential to benefit from this research opportunity. This should NOT be a person with whom you have a personal relationship (i.e., not a family member, close friend, partners, etc.). <i>The reference should be no longer than one page. The applicant may email this to resinfo@bcchr.ca or upload it as part of their application.</i>

Application Deadline: Monday, December 1, 2025. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

All applicants will be contacted by Friday, February 20, 2026.

For any additional questions or concerns contact resinfo@bcchr.ca.

Please note, under the BC Ministry of Justice’s [Criminal Record Review Act \(CRRRA\)](#), all individuals affiliated with BC Children’s Hospital must complete a criminal record check for relevant or specified offences prior to being hired. Applicants identified as posing a danger to children in any capacity through this check will be ineligible for a Rising Scholars Undergraduate Summer Studentship.

Appendix #1: Research Project Placements

Rising Scholars Undergraduate Summer Studentship recipients will be placed on one of the following research projects taking place during June and July. Applicants will be assigned based on research interests expressed in the applications.

Please note that placement on a specific project is not guaranteed.

Research Placement #1:

Project Title	“Support with eating has always been... a piece but not the whole thing”: Engaging with young people to improve care for chronic pain and eating concerns
Project Summary	<p>Young people who experience chronic pain—particularly pain that impacts the gastrointestinal system—often restrict their eating to manage symptoms. Conversely, young people who experience disordered eating often report painful physical symptoms such as abdominal pain, bloating, and nausea. These overlapping concerns are increasingly acknowledged by health professionals, and yet there is little research to guide assessment or treatment decisions. Additionally, clinical services are often siloed, meaning that care may be provided for pain <i>or</i> eating without consideration of how they intersect.</p> <p>This project will examine the experiences of adolescents and young adults (aged 14–25 years) who self-identity as having chronic pain and disordered eating. Participants will complete a semi-structured interview asking them to construct a timeline illustrating their challenges with pain and eating, attempts to access a diagnosis and/or treatment, and how intersecting identities impact these experiences. Participants will be recruited from clinical settings and communities within British Columbia, with an aim to access a diverse sample with respect to geographic location, gender, diagnosis, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and co-occurring conditions.</p> <p>This project will inform future community-oriented knowledge translation efforts. The aim is to identify key patient-oriented research priorities and to develop a more fulsome understanding of the overlap between chronic pain and eating disorders in young people to inform future research and clinical practice.</p>
Tasks	<p><i>Tasks are subject to change. No prior research experience is required—full training and support will be provided.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Literature review- Recruiting and consenting participants- Engaging with patient partners to incorporate lived experience perspectives into study design, conduct, and dissemination- Observing and/or co-leading semi-structured interviews with participants- Conducting descriptive statistics of quantitative demographic data- Conducting reflexive thematic analysis of qualitative interview data- Writing manuscript drafts for publication- Engaging in other forms of knowledge dissemination (e.g., preparation of an infographic, conference posters etc.)
Mentors	<p><u>Dr. Katelynn Boerner</u> (she/her) – Investigator, BC Children's Hospital; Psychologist, Complex Pain Service, BC Children’s Hospital; Assistant Professor, UBC Department of Pediatrics</p> <p>Dr. Boerner is a leading expert on the role of sex, gender, and neurodiversity in pain. She completed her PhD in Clinical Psychology at Dalhousie University, and residency in Child Clinical Psychology at the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario. This was followed by postdoctoral fellowships in Psychiatry and Pediatrics at the University of British Columbia.</p> <p>Dr. Boerner is actively involved in leadership positions with the Sex, Gender, and Racial Differences in Pain Special Interest Group of the International Association for the Study of Pain, and the Gender Health Special Interest Group of the Society of Pediatric Psychology. In addition to her work, she is an amateur pianist, a fair-weather runner, the proud mum of a kindergartener, and is always on the hunt for an amazing coffee.</p>

	<p><u>Dr. Jennifer Coelho</u> (she/her) – Investigator, BC Children's Hospital; Psychologist, Provincial Specialized Eating Disorders Program for Children & Adolescents, BC Children's Hospital; Clinical Associate Professor, UBC Department of Psychiatry</p> <p>Over the past two decades, Dr. Coelho has specialized in research and clinical work relating to eating disorders and problematic eating behaviours. She received her PhD from the University of Toronto and went on to complete two postdoctoral fellowships at Maastricht University (the Netherlands) and University of Savoie (France). In her current role, Dr. Coelho provides evidence-based therapies for children and youth with eating disorders and works to integrate and apply her research findings to improve clinical care for pediatric eating disorders.</p> <p>When she is not working, Dr. Coelho loves to travel—both within beautiful British Columbia and further afield.</p>
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Research Placement #2:

Project Title	Evaluation of Long-Term Effectiveness of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine: The QUEST-Advance Study
Project Summary	<p>The quadrivalent human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine evaluation study with addition of the nonavalent vaccine study (QUEST-ADVANCE) aims to provide insight into the long-term immunogenicity and effectiveness of three, two, and one doses of HPV vaccines. QUEST-ADVANCE is an observational cohort study including males and females who are unvaccinated or vaccinated with the quadrivalent or nonavalent HPV vaccine in British Columbia, Canada.</p> <p>Female participants who are unvaccinated or vaccinated with 1–3 doses of the quadrivalent or nonavalent HPV vaccine at 9–14 years of age have been recruited approximately 12 years post-vaccination eligibility.</p> <p>Male participants who are unvaccinated or vaccinated with 1 or 2 doses of the nonavalent HPV vaccine at 11–12 years of age are being recruited at approximately 5 years post-vaccination eligibility.</p> <p>The study involves a maximum of four visits over a period of 4–5 years for female participants, and two visits over a 12-month period for male participants. At each visit, self-collected swabs (cervico-vaginal or penile) and questionnaire data are collected. In each study group, a subset of participants is invited to participate in an optional sub-study evaluating the long-term humoral immunogenicity of the HPV vaccine. Additional blood samples are collected from participants who are part of the immunogenicity sub-study.</p> <p>The primary objectives are (1) to examine vaccine effectiveness (VE) in males and females against prevalent genital HPV infection for one, two, and three doses of the HPV vaccine compared to unvaccinated participants, and (2) to evaluate whether there is non-inferior immunogenicity of one dose of the HPV vaccine in 20–27 year-old females vaccinated at 9–14 years of age compared with historical data of three doses of the HPV vaccine females vaccinated at 16–26 years of age up to 12 years post-vaccination.</p>
Tasks	<p><i>Tasks are subject to change. No prior research experience is required—full training and support will be provided.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Recruitment and consenting participants- Scheduling and supporting study visits/data collection- Laboratory work including sample processing and assay performance- Data analysis and interpretation

Mentors	<p><u>Dr. Manish Sadarangani</u> (he/him) – Investigator, BC Children's Hospital; Director, Vaccine Evaluation Center, BC Children's Hospital; Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics, UBC</p> <p>Dr. Sadarangani is the Director of the Vaccine Evaluation Center at BC Children's Hospital Research Institute, and an Associate Professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases, UBC Department of Pediatrics. He is an internationally recognized vaccine researcher and expert in translational vaccinology. As a pediatric infectious disease clinician-scientist with a PhD in vaccine development and evaluation (Oxford University), he integrates the full breadth of vaccine science via a unique combination of laboratory, clinical and epidemiologic research. His training across four continents (Europe, Canada, Africa, Australia) gives his work a global perspective.</p> <p>Dr. Sadarangani is co-PI of the Immunization Monitoring Program ACTive (IMPACT) Network (research of vaccine preventable diseases in 14 pediatric hospitals) and a PI of Pediatric Outcome imProvement through COordination of Research Networks (POPCORN) Network (pediatric research at 16 hospitals). The VEC also hosts the IMPACT Data Center, which is led by Dr. Julie Bettinger, a Professor in Pediatrics at UBC and an Investigator at BCCHR.</p> <p>Dr. Sadarangani is Chair of the Canadian Association for Immunization Research, Evaluation and Education (CAIRE), representing >100 members from >30 institutions. CAIRE facilitates direct interactions of policy makers, industry, public health, clinicians and researchers for rapid integrated KT. Highlighting his international leadership, Dr. Sadarangani is/has been an advisory committee member for global groups. He is a member of the <i>WHO Technical Advisory Group on Vaccines against Antimicrobial Resistance</i> and the <i>WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization Meningococcal Working Group</i>. He was a member of the CEPI Systems Immunology Task Force to establish a harmonized approach to immunologic evaluation of new vaccines—including mRNA vaccines—and is part of CEPI's translational immunology and human infection model groups to advise global vaccine manufacturers and researchers about vaccine development and evaluation.</p>
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