**Child & Adolescent Mental Health**

**Personal Statement**

Dear Admissions Committee,

I am writing to you to express my keen interest in pursuing a master’s degree in child and adolescent mental health. As someone who is deeply passionate about mental health and dedicated to making a meaningful impact in this field, I believe that this program will equip me with the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute to the understanding and treatment of difficulties that many young people face daily.

Having to choose a degree that will decide what you do for the rest of your life is usually quite difficult, but my decision to study clinical psychology was one of the easiest. For as long as I can remember, I have been fascinated by the complexities of the human mind and the profound influence it has on our emotions and behaviours, but watching one of my closest friends battle with mental health at the age of 15 was ultimately what confirmed my decision to pursue a bachelor’s degree in clinical psychology.

My passion has always revolved around helping people. Being able to use my degree to do that has been and will always be a great opportunity and is exactly what I want to dedicate my life to. Throughout my undergraduate studies, I gained a solid foundation in psychology, understanding the intricacies of human behaviour, and the importance of mental health. However, it was during my placement year at a grammar school that I truly witnessed the pressing need for specialised care and support for young people struggling with mental health.

I was lucky to have gained a place on a highly sought after placement where I had the opportunity to support and guide students through various personal and academic challenges. Between September 2021 and June 2022, I worked with students between the ages of 11 and 19 who struggled with various problems such as bullying, stress management, eating disorders, depression, anxiety, OCD, ASD, and cyclothymia. My primary responsibility was to create a safe and confidential space where the students could express their concerns, seek guidance, or even just escape their chaos for a little while. I actively engaged with students on an individual basis and in group settings, conducting counselling sessions to address their emotional, social, and educational needs.

Throughout my placement year, I developed several essential skills. Active listening and empathy allowed me to truly understand the unique experiences and emotions of each student. I honed my ability to provide guidance and support tailored to individual needs, fostering personal growth and resilience. The key aspects of my role were collaboration and crisis intervention. I worked closely with the pastoral team and other staff members to address student concerns, ensure that appropriate support mechanisms were in place to enhance students’ overall wellbeing, and to implement preventative programs that promoted mental health awareness among students.

The experience not only exposed me to the challenges young people face daily, but also ignited a profound empathy within me. Interacting with these young individuals, listening to their stories, and witnessing the transformative power of intervention solidified my commitment to this field. I am ready to embrace the challenges and rewards that come with this journey, and I am excited about the possibility of joining this program where I can further develop my skills, contribute to the advancement of the field, and be one step closer to achieving my goal of becoming a clinical psychologist.