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Perceptions and experiences of educational psychologists: training within the framework of a systemic reflecting team model

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APPENDIX A: LETTER TO SEEK PERMISSION

Director of the Organization

Perceptions and experiences of Educational Psychologists: Training within the framework of a systemic reflecting team model

Dear Director,

Good day. My name is Jodi Miller and I am an Educational Psychology Master's student studying at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for the completion of my degree.

As per verbal discussions with the Head of Counselling, I would like to conduct my research on your organization's model of family therapy. Currently within the South African context there is a move towards exploring mental health within a systemic framework. The family system is viewed as vital to the well-being of children. This system is particularly relevant within the South African context due to various factors which can affect the family unit. In addition collaborative consultancy, which forms part of the organization's model of therapy, has become desirable in attending to the needs of families and in particular to children. Systemic theory and collaborative consultancy have the potential to work well in terms of addressing family therapy within the South African context. The organization's model of family therapy appears to provide a useful model of culturally relevant family therapy which talks to both systemic theory and collaboration.

The primary aim of my research will be to explore the experiences and perceptions that past educational psychology interns have of their experiences of working in a reflecting team and what effect this has had on their current practice. This research could inform the future training of educational psychologists.

For participation in this study, 10 - 12 past educational psychology interns who have worked in a reflecting team at the organization during their internship year will be interviewed using a one-to-one, face-to-face, semi-structured interview for approximately 75 minutes. Where it is not possible to do a face-face interview, the interview will take place over the phone. In

addition I would like to conduct a semi-structured interview with the Head of Counselling in order to gather background information regarding the organisation's model of family therapy.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and no one will be disadvantaged or advantaged for choosing to participate or choosing not to participate in this study. Due to the nature of this study, there are no inherent risks or dangers to you, the practitioners, or the organization. There are also no inherent benefits. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study at any time or choose not to answer specific questions without negative consequences. Anonymity will be ensured in the recording of the data. Confidentiality can be guaranteed since the interviews will take place on a one to one basis and the results will be processed by myself (the researcher) and my supervisor. If direct quotes are used from the responses, no identifying information will accompany that quote. The data that is collected will be safeguarded and locked in a filing cabinet or in a password protected computer. Anonymity will be respected in handling of all data related to the participants and my supervisor and I will only have access to such information and data. The research results will be reported in the form of a research report and will be made available on the university web. The study may also be published in the form of a journal article; you will be collaborated with in this regard, as previously discussed. General feedback from the results of the study will be presented in a summary and will be sent to the organization once the research is completed. A copy of the final report will be sent to you as the Director.

I formally request your permission to conduct this research project at the organization. Space is provided for you to sign on the next page should you agree to grant permission for this study to proceed.

Yours sincerely,

Jodi Miller

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Dr Zaytoon Amod

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