

2020 Graduate Scholarship recipient: Stephanie Maher (Telethon Kids Institute)



About me

I grew up in a health-conscious family with my mum a child health nurse. I'm sure this early exposure influenced my interest in my own health needs. When I finished school, I worked in early years education for a couple of years. Then I started my Curtin University journey as an occupational therapy student before I changed to health promotion and completed my BSc (Health Promotion) course in 2019. During this time, I was often drawn to harm reduction ideas and children's health. Putting these two together links my work in early years education and Uni studies in health promotion. Something about health promotion that I like is the ability to support many people's health at a community level instead of at a one-on-one level. I feel like this is wonderful because there is the potential increase the quality of life for so many individuals.

About my Scholarship Project

I am thrilled to be working in the Health Promotion and Education Research Team at Telethon Kids Institute. I am involved in a project titled, "Building Out Bullying" that aims to improve the bullying behaviour and mental health of WA school children. Many school bullying interventions encourage bullying victims to seek help from teachers. However, students who report bullying incidents to school staff may ultimately worsen their situation. School staff have also reported insufficient training to adequately address bullying behaviour.

My focus includes examining school staff responses to student reports of bullying victimisation, school and individual factors influencing school staff responses to student reports of bullying victimisation and strategies and interventions to improve school staff responses to student reports of bullying victimisation. I will conduct a rapid review of the literature, facilitate phone interviews with school staff, analyse data, and synthesise the findings to develop best practice recommendations for school staff and potential interventions to reduce bullying behaviour. I am looking forward to developing my research skills at Telethon Kids with the support of AHPA and Healthway.