

## ISLAND B.R.A.I.N. Lab

Behavioral Research and Instructional Neuroscience  
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# Program Evaluation Group

## DESCRIPTION

The Little Dog Laughed (TLDL) is a 501-C3 non-profit organization whose goal is to use dog training to support behavioral therapy professionals in their effort to nurture empathy and non-violent problem-solving skills. STAR (See, Tag And Reward) therapy dog teams offer Washington County teachers, therapists and counselors a cost-free tool for therapeutic intervention. STAR teams, model gentle, safe and respectful interaction with animals, demonstrate positive training as an antidote to use of force. The two therapy dogs are Papillons, selected for emotional nurturing and behavioral therapy because the breed possess calm, easy-going temperaments, so much so that the natural morphology of their mouth results in a perceptible smile. Further, Papillons are a highly trainable breed with a smaller stature, which means they are less threatening, especially to children who may have had negative histories with animals.

In a carefully structured set of classes (15 – 30 minutes), children are invited to interact with the dogs, and to help teach a STAR dog a new game. By learning how to train a dog, children experience first hand the efficacy of clear communication and a positive, socially acceptable method of "getting what you want." There will be approximately 4 – 5 possible sites per week that you will travel to in an effort to work with children in two different age groups.

"The Littles" are 5-8 years of age and interact with Lilli and Eli, the two therapy dogs for 15 minutes. The second group is 8–15 years, "The Big Kids" and has a slightly longer training period, approximately 30 minutes.



**The Little Dog  
Laughed**  
Animal-Assisted Therapy

## Job Descriptions

There are several potential roles you could serve to assist Linda and her colleagues during the week, but you will all be an author, collaborator, and a presenter on each other's projects.

**Field Assistant.** This person will travel to different sites (e.g., Harkins House, The Raphael House, McKay Elementary, Monica House, *Give us This Day* Foster Care) within

Washington County and be available for whatever job is required. This may include but is not limited to:

- 1.) assist in setting up and carrying property (i.e., “props”),
- 2.) team-building with the children,
- 3.) assist in the clicker training,
- 4.) Eli/Lili entourage duties (e.g., walk, waste removal, and introductions)
- 5.) Any other job that requires direct interaction, intervention, and encouragement of the children.

**Field Observers.** Since the primary purpose of this project is to collect data for outcome assessment, it would be ideal to have two behavioral observers at each site who work together to establish inter-rater reliability and to best appreciate how to establish meaningful, measurable, behavioral improvement—this may be on a single visit or on multiple visits.

**Program Manager.** This person will be responsible for creating the program assessment based on feedback from the field assistants and observers. They will be responsible for the empirical review as well as creating the program evaluation. They may also be asked to research grants applicable for this kind of program.

### **Goal for PSY 451**

- 1.) Construct an empirical review of science-based animal-assisted programs and their methodology, efficacy, and outcomes.
- 2.) Identify meaningful empirical, testable questions pertaining to the efficacy and outcomes of the Little Dog Laughed program.
- 3.) Create a program evaluation that might be used for grants, government certifications, and of course for your senior thesis presentations.
- 4.) Provide field experience working with children who have been exposed to domestic violence and therapeutic tools, useful for those interested in pursuing counseling opportunities.

### **Requirements**

There are some certifications and specific requirements for both senior thesis and TLDL. These are not negotiable, you must complete each of them to be involved in Professor Island’s senior thesis section or with The Little Dog Laughed.

**Island PSY 451 Requirements.** Everyone in my laboratory must earn their CPR and First Aid certification before next fall. Document your costs and submit them for reimbursement next year when you apply for the Senior Research honorarium. Additionally, I expect you, also before next fall, to complete the National Institute of Health (NIH) Research with Human Participants certification. This link is available on Pacific University’s IRB website.

**TLDL Requirements.** Since you will be working with both protected populations and children of domestic violence, you must submit to a criminal background check, this should be completed and submitted for review by the end of the semester. You need to be available to go to each site 4-5 times each week (this may be less some weeks). Each site has its own

requirements, which will involve an initial trip to the site to interview with site managers. At that time participants will sign documents covering confidentiality, security, etc. Participants are expected to be familiar with the TLDL FAQ sheets covering general information about the program. TLDL will also conduct a 1- to 2-hour review of operant conditioning and positive training, with attention to how concepts, activities, and expectations are adjusted for specific target groups in school, foster, and domestic violence shelters. This review class will most likely be conducted at the dog training facility “Educating Fido” 14865 SW 74th Avenue, Suite 220 Tigard, OR.

## **Calendar**

Here are the tentative times during the week and their respective sites that you might expect to go to work with the therapy dogs and the children (limited to no more than 6).

Confirmed on-going commitments for the 2015-2016 school year:

- Every Tuesday, 4:15 pm – 5:15 pm Raphael House Domestic Violence Shelter  
Proposed meeting place: Sound Grounds. 3701 SE Belmont St. Portland, OR
- Every Wednesday, 6:00 – 8:00 pm Monika’s House Domestic Violence Shelter  
Proposed meeting place: Starbucks 16005 Southwest Walker Road Beaverton, OR

## **Contact People**

- 1.) **Raphael House**, Supervisor: Lindsey Vold; Email: [LVold@raphaelhouse.com](mailto:LVold@raphaelhouse.com)
- 2.) **Monika’s House**, Supervisor: Evanna Bradley-Tschirigi; Email: [evannab@dvrc-or.org](mailto:evannab@dvrc-or.org)
- 3.) **Linda Keast**, The Little Dog Laughed Animal Assisted Therapy, Director  
Website: <http://www.thelittledoglaughed.org>; Email: [ldkeast@comcast.net](mailto:ldkeast@comcast.net)

## **Texts**

Shimel, Joshua (2012). Writing Science: How to write papers that get cited and proposals that get funded. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

## B.R.A.I.N. Lab Relevant Dates

DATE		To Submit
Friday August 24, 2015	AZA Poster Due to Cheryl Wallen: <a href="mailto:cwallen@aza.org">cwallen@aza.org</a>	Poster
Monday August 31, 2015	Week I: First Day of Fall Semester	
Tuesday September 1, 2015	Week I: First Lab Meeting at 11:30 – 12:30 pm (2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month)	Pac Thai or 1910 Main
Saturday & Sunday September 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup>	2015 AZA Annual Conference <a href="https://www.aza.org/annualconference/">https://www.aza.org/annualconference/</a>	Salt Palace Convention Cntr, Salt Lake City, UT
Tuesday Nov. 10, 2015	PRISM Conference, MPR 3:30 – 6:00	
Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2015	American Evaluation Society Conference: <a href="http://www.eval.org/Evaluation2015">http://www.eval.org/Evaluation2015</a>	Chicago, IL
Nov. 16, 2015	WPA Abstract and Registration deadline: <a href="http://westernpsych.org/convention/">http://westernpsych.org/convention/</a>	Abstract and Registration
Monday February 1, 2016	OAS Abstract, Registration Due via Email <a href="http://www.oas.pdx.edu">http://www.oas.pdx.edu</a>	Abstract Due and Registration
Friday February 19	OAS Presentations Deadline	OAS PowerPoint
Saturday February 27, 2016	Oregon Academy of Science (OAS) Conference <a href="http://www.oas.pdx.edu">http://www.oas.pdx.edu</a>	Pacific University Forest Grove, OR
Friday April 15, 2016	WPA Poster Deadline	Posters Due
Thursday April 21, 2016	SPD PowerPoint Presentation Deadline	Presentations Due
Friday April 22, 2016	Senior Project Day Presentation Practice, Round I	Presentations
Monday April 25, 2016	Senior Project Day Presentation Practice, Round II	Presentations
Wednesday April 27, 2016	Senior Projects Day	Presentations
April 28 – May 1, 2016	Western Psychological Association Conference <a href="http://westernpsych.org/convention/">http://westernpsych.org/convention/</a>	Westin Long Beach, CA

### Other deadlines

Graduation Registration	TBA
SPD Registration	TBA
SPD Abstract Submission	TBA
CAS Research Awards	TBA