

## FAQs for Psychologists Working with Children/Adolescents: CFP or CCAP?

This document contains answers to questions most likely to be posed by psychologists serving children and adolescents about the most appropriate ABPP specialty for them. There is also information about the requirements for specialty status for both Couple and Family Psychology (CFP) and Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology (CCAP). Finally, there are resources for psychologists who wish to learn more about a CFP approach to behavioral health services to child/adolescent populations.

**Question 1:** Doesn't the specialty choice depend on what kind of **doctoral degree** you have? Isn't a psychologist with a doctoral degree in clinical or counseling psychology on a child/adolescent track best suited for an ABPP in CCAP?

**Answer:** Not necessarily. Psychologists with doctoral degrees in clinical, counseling or school psychology from APA or CPA accredited programs are eligible for the ABPP in CFP or CCAP (see Table 1). Several factors should be considered in determining specialty, including theoretical orientation and specific training and practice experiences (see Table 2).

**Question 2:** Is the specialty choice dictated by the **type of internship** you've completed? For example, a pediatric psychology internship is needed for the ABPP in CCAP, and is not a good match for the ABPP in CFP, right?

**Answer:** If two thirds of the internship has been focused on child/adolescent populations, the psychologist is eligible for the ABPP in either CCAP or CFP. If less than two thirds of the internship has been focused on child/adolescent populations, CFP may be a better match.

**Question 3:** I didn't complete a formal postdoctoral program, but I just completed a year of supervised postdoctoral practice with children and families, including some family therapy experience. My doctoral program and internship could support either specialty. Which one should I choose?

**Answer:** At this point you could choose either CFP or CCAP, but you'll need two more years of post-degree experience before you are eligible for the ABPP in CCAP. If your training, supervision, and/or practice meet one or more of several criteria listed in Table 2, you could be eligible for an ABPP in CFP now.

**Question 4:** I was told that the specialty I choose should match my work setting. I work in a children's hospital, so I should select the specialty of CCAP, right?

**Answer:** Not necessarily. You should choose a specialty that matches your training, skill set, and conceptual orientation, not your treatment or work setting. Psychologists who work in a children's hospital can have an ABPP in CCAP, CFP, or other specialties.

**Question 5:** I provide behavioral health services only to children and adolescents, and not to adults unless they are parents of the patients I treat. Nor do I do couples therapy. Which specialty is right for me?

**Answer:** You should select a specialty that matches your training, skill set, and conceptual orientation, not the population you serve. You don't have to do couples assessment or therapy to be eligible for an ABPP in CFP. Many couple and family psychologists work only with children and their families.

**Question 6:** I consider developmental and contextual factors in assessment and treatment of children, but I don't do family therapy. Should I get my ABPP in CCAP or CFP?

**Answer:** Either. The specialty of CFP is not equivalent with or confined to family therapy. CFP is a broad and general specialty that is founded on a systemic epistemology, including explicit awareness of the importance of context, diversity, and developmental perspectives, to understand, assess, and treat the comprehensive issues of psychological health and pathology. The crucial element of the specialty is a thorough systemic conceptualization and the application of systemic concepts to human behavior.

**Question 7:** I was trained primarily as a child psychologist, but now have a position in which I am doing training, program development/evaluation, and administrative work for a behavioral health care system. Which specialty is the best match for me?

**Answer:** The specialty of CFP may be a good match for you, assuming you have adequate training and experience in the application of systemic concepts to human behavior in healthcare teams, organizations, and systems of care.

**Question 8:** My training is in clinical child and adolescent psychology, but I find myself doing more family therapy and systemic conceptualizations the longer I am in practice. I have attended several workshops on family therapy, and I am wondering if the CFP specialty is right for me.

**Answer:** The CFP specialty may be right for you. It is not unusual for psychologists who work with children/adolescents and their families to evolve their practice over time to prioritize systemic conceptualizations and interventions, even if they don't conduct "whole family" therapy with most of their cases. Review Table 2 to determine if the CFP specialty may be a good fit for you.

**Table 1. Minimum Requirements for Specialty in CFP and CCAP**

Requirement	Specialty
Doctoral degree in clinical psychology <sup>1</sup> child/adolescent track	CFP or CCAP
Doctoral degree in counseling or school psychology program <sup>1</sup>	CFP or CCAP
Internship program <sup>1</sup> , at least 2/3 of training focused on child/adolescent populations	CFP or CCAP
Internship program <sup>1</sup> , less than 2/3 of training focused on child/adolescent populations	CFP
A year of supervised postdoctoral practice experience, child/adolescent populations	CFP or CCAP
A minimum of 3 years of post-degree experience (including year of supervised practice)	CCAP <sup>2</sup>
Training, supervision, or practice in CFP <sup>3</sup>	CFP

Notes. CFP=Couple & Family Psychology, CCAP=Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology. <sup>1</sup>Accredited by APA or CPA. <sup>2</sup>If doctoral degree is in school or counseling psychology, requirement is 5 years of postdoctoral experience (with 1 year supervised) or 2-year CCAP postdoctoral program. <sup>3</sup>As demonstrated by one or more of several criteria; see Table 2.

**Table 2. One or More Criteria<sup>a</sup> Showing Training, Supervision or Practice in CFP**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An internship with a CFP track or rotation</li> <li>• A postdoc with a 30-50% of supervised service delivery in CFP</li> <li>• Four graduate courses and two practica in CFP</li> <li>• 25 hours of didactic CFP (CE's) training post-graduation</li> <li>• 25 hours or more of supervision by a Specialist in CFP</li> <li>• 40 hours or more of regular supervision by an expert in CFP (non- Specialist)</li> <li>• Teaching CFP courses at the undergraduate, graduate, or postdoctoral levels</li> <li>• Research and publication of CFP theory and application</li> <li>• 40 or more hours of supervision of CFP graduate and postdoctoral students</li> <li>• Highly favorable letters of recommendation from two supervisors or colleagues</li> </ul>
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Note. <sup>a</sup>List is non-exhaustive, and specialty specific education and training can be demonstrated through a combination of these experiences.

### Resources:

Celano, M.P. (2018). *Children with emotional and behavioral disorders: Systemic practice*. New York: Momentum Press.

Pinsof, W.M., Breunlin, D.C., Russell, W.P., Lebow, J.L., Rampage, C., & Chambers, A.L. (2018). *Integrative systemic therapy: Metaframeworks for problem solving with individuals, couples, and families*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.