

Sabine Soltani



Biography

Sabine's interest in psychology was sparked by psychology classes she took while completing her BA in Communications Studies in 2007. After working in communications for several years, Sabine returned to school and earned her BA in Psychology (First Class Honours) in 2014. In 2016 she successfully completed her MA in Clinical Psychology at the University of Regina and is now pursuing her doctorate at the University of Calgary.

Sabine's research has broadly focused on attentional biases, cognitive factors, and dispositional constructs underlying psychopathology. Her clinical experience working with individuals with chronic pain fueled her interest in the complex interplay of bio-psycho-social factors and how they influence and maintain the experience of chronic pain. Her dissertation research focuses on the role of cognitive-affective mechanisms underlying the co-occurrence of chronic pain and anxiety disorders in youth.

Project Summary

The Roles of Attention and Transdiagnostic Risk Factors in Co-occurring Anxiety and Pediatric Chronic Pain: A Longitudinal Eye Tracking Study

Chronic pain is highly prevalent in childhood, typically peaks in adolescence, and is associated with devastating effects at the individual, family, and societal level. Chronic pain often persists into adulthood, making it a lifelong problem for many youth. Unfortunately, treatments for chronic pain only work for a small percentage of youth and children who also have anxiety. Research has shown that anxiety often co-occurs with chronic pain, and that the two conditions may be maintained by similar cognitive (e.g., attention biases) and emotional (e.g., anxiety sensitivity) factors; however, no research has examined factors underlying these two conditions in youth. The aim of this research study is to examine the roles of modifiable cognitive (attention) and emotional (anxiety-related variables) factors in influencing the co-occurrence of anxiety and chronic pain in adolescence. 120

youth (60 with chronic pain; 60 healthy) will come to the research lab at two time points to complete questionnaires and an eye-tracking task to examine attention biases to pictures of children in pain. The results of this research will inform the development of tailored interventions for children with co-occurring anxiety and chronic pain to improve their recovery and prevent problems from persisting into adulthood.