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## Casa Central – Violence Prevention & Intervention Masters Level Internship Information

The Violence Prevention & Intervention programs' overarching objective is to prevent and reduce the trauma of exposure to violence in children, families, individuals and communities.

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### Program Overview

Casa Central was founded in 1954 by a multi-denominational group of churches to provide social services to Chicago's growing Latino population. Since then, Casa Central has evolved from an organization with three employees and a \$26,000 budget to a nationally recognized agency with over 500 staff members and an \$11 million budget.

In 1987, the agency opened the doors of its Domestic Violence Intervention (DVI) program. DVI provides crisis intervention, supportive group and individual counseling, psychoeducation, information and referral and safety planning services to adults experiencing domestic violence. The Casa Central Safe Start program began in 2007. Safe Start provides services to children under the age of 6 and their families who have been impacted by exposure to violence in their homes and communities. The program targets communities on Chicago's west side and is part of a statewide network of similar sites, providing Safe Start/Safe From the Start services to young children and families.

The DVI and Safe Start programs comprise the agency's Violence Prevention and Intervention (VPI) programs. VPI has three main areas of focus:

- 1.) To increase community knowledge about the impact of violence on young children, individuals, families and communities, as well as increase awareness of violence prevention and intervention resources through providing trainings for parents, community members, and early childhood professionals

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- 2.) To provide accessible, culturally sensitive, and developmentally appropriate supportive and therapeutic services for young children and families exposed to violence, and
- 3.) To build and maintain a dynamic coalition comprised of stakeholders in Chicago's west side neighborhoods for the purpose of collaboration, resource-sharing, and development of a coordinated community response to violence.

VPI is a relatively small, but vibrant and growing, department. Its staff includes one full-time Program Director, one full-time Safe Start Therapist, one part-time Program Assistant, one full-time Family & Community Service Coordinator, and three full-time Therapists who primarily work with families who are involved with the child welfare system. We rely greatly on our interns, who provide valuable and much-needed services to our clients and the broader community.

### Internship Specifics

The internship placement is designed for second-year masters-level students in social work, counseling, or a related discipline. The ideal intern will be self-motivated and engaged in his/her own learning process. Preference is given to students who are bilingual (English/Spanish) and who have already completed a certified 40-hour domestic violence training. A specific interest in working with young children and their families, and/or in violence- and trauma-related issues is helpful.

Interns will be required to complete a certified 40-hour domestic violence before the end of the first semester (and, ideally, prior to beginning their internship experience); if this training is not completed, students will not be permitted to continue their direct clinical counseling work with clients. Any costs incurred related to the training are the intern's responsibility, but hours spent in the training will be counted as practicum hours. All interns will also be expected to participate in in-service trainings at the agency related to domestic violence, child abuse, child development, and children's exposure to violence.

There are several opportunities for interns to complete the 40-hour domestic violence training. Some options are listed below; students are also encouraged to explore other options and review them with the Program Director prior to enrollment (a relatively comprehensive, and typically current, listing of available 40-hour trainings is available online at <http://www.ilcdvp.org>). Please note that 40-hour trainings tend to fill up very quickly; advance registration is strongly encouraged.

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- **Apna Ghar** (training held at the Bridgeview Bank Building, 4753 North Broadway)  
Cost: \$175 for students (with valid student ID); \$75 for Casa Central-affiliated students due to a networking agreement  
Contact: Sanjna Das, 773-334-0173, ext. 243
  
- **Between Friends** (training held in the Rogers Park neighborhood of Chicago)  
Cost: \$250; free for individuals who commit to volunteering at least 2 hours per week with Between Friends for a minimum of one year  
Contact: 773-274-5232
  
- **CAWC** (Connections for Abused Women and their Children) (training held at the CAWC Offices, 1116 North Kedzie)  
Dates: Fall, Winter & Spring, over the course of 7 Saturdays  
Cost: \$250; free for individuals who commit to volunteering at least 4 hours per month with CAWC for a minimum of one year  
Contact: Megan Rosado, 773-489-9081, ext. 22 or [mrosado@cawc.org](mailto:mrosado@cawc.org)
  
- **Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network** (training held at the Network offices, 1 East Wacker, Suite 1630)  
Cost: \$150 for interns at Network member agencies  
Contact: 312-750-0730 or visit <http://www.batteredwomensnetwork.org> for registration information
  
- **Community Crisis Center** (training held in Elgin)  
Cost: \$30 for CCC volunteers; \$300 for professionals or students  
Contact: 847-742-4088
  
- **Crisis Center for South Suburbia** (training held in the Tinley Park area)  
Cost: \$150  
Contact: 708-429-7255
  
- **Mujeres Latinas en Acción** Spanish-language 40-Hour Domestic Violence Training (training held at the MLEA Offices, 2124 West 21st Place)  
Cost: \$250; free for individuals who commit to volunteering with Mujeres Latinas for a minimum of one year  
Contact: 773-890-7676

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- **South Suburban Family Shelter** (training typically held at Prairie State College in Chicago Heights)

Cost: \$250 (\$150 per person for groups of 3 or more)

Contact: Brianne, 708-798-7737

Scheduling internship hours can be somewhat flexible—we understand the many demands on your busy lives. Interns should plan to work at least one or two evenings per week (until 6 or 7pm) in order to accommodate clients' schedules; limited Saturday hours may also be available.

### **Intern Responsibilities & Learning Opportunities**

Interns receive regular individual supervision. Additionally, interns participate in group supervision and case consultation on a monthly basis. They are expected to bring thoughtful reflection on their own clinical work and the work of their VPI colleagues, presenting and responding to challenging and difficult cases.

Interns will have the opportunity to complete developmental assessments and complete family psychosocial histories. They will provide individual therapy to children and adults, as well as family therapy (parent/infant dyads, siblings, several children and a caretaker, etc.). If interested, interns will have the opportunity to facilitate or co-facilitate a group, potentially of their own design, for adults and/or children.

If interested, each intern will have the opportunity to design and implement at least one public education presentation for parents, community members or professionals who work with young children related to children's exposure to violence, keeping children safe, and/or promoting optimal early childhood development. Possible themes/topics might include:

- Playful parenting,
- Supporting traumatized children in the classroom,
- Overview of children's exposure to violence,
- Recognizing and responding to domestic violence.

Interns can also participate in Casa Central Safe Start Coalition activities, including meetings, trainings, and outreach activities. Interns will also have the opportunity to participate in other community coalitions, trainings, and outreach activities.

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### Research Opportunities

Through its partnership with Safe from the Start/Safe Start sites across the state, Casa Central's Safe Start participates in an ongoing research/evaluation process, coordinated by Dr. Paul Schewe from the Interdisciplinary Center for Research on Violence at the University of Illinois at Chicago. This research is exploring the effectiveness of the clinical services provided to children ages 0-5 and their families. With permission from the funder and UIC, site-specific data may be available to students for use in research. Bear in mind, however, that the process of getting this approval may be lengthy; students should plan accordingly.

In the past, several students have completed independent research projects with VPI. One student interviewed program participants to explore service adaptations for Latino families receiving violence-related clinical services; another conducted follow-up research to gauge the impact of a Safe Start training program on participants' work with families impacted by violence. Many students also complete course assignments based on work with families they are serving; with client consent, students can typically videotape sessions or complete additional assessments with families. Large-scale/macro-level projects are also an option.

In order to complete any research with Casa Central clients, students must submit a written description of the proposed research to their immediate supervisor, who will seek out the appropriate administrative approvals. The intern's supervisor can help facilitate this process.

### Supervision Philosophy

Supervision is extremely important to VPI; we value and prioritize it. We believe that—much like a therapeutic relationship—the primary value of supervision comes from having a safe and supportive environment in which the supervisee can build on his or her own skills and insights as a practitioner, and in which the supervisee can reflect on any aspect of his or her profession and his or her client and professional relationships. We draw on Jeree Pawl's "Platinum Rule" in our supervision: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto others." In other words, supervisors treat students in the same way we hope students treat parents... and students treat parents in the same way they hope parents treat children.

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The ultimate aim of supervision is to enable supervisees to enhance the service they offer to clients, and to safeguard and enhance their own well-being while doing it. In terms of subject matter, the primary focus of the supervision process is the supervisee and the therapeutic process unfolding between her/him and her/his clients as opposed to administrative issues.

The Safe Start program primarily draws upon a Reflective Supervision model. This model is common in early childhood settings, and emphasizes the importance of collaborative reflection (or “thinking and wondering together”) in an atmosphere of safety, consistency and trust.

We believe that the agenda for supervision should be driven by the supervisee; as such, students will get as much from supervision as they are willing to put into it!