



## **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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**To apply for this internship opportunity**, please visit Casa Central’s website ([www.casacentral.org](http://www.casacentral.org)) and click on “Careers.”

### **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 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 and experiences of trauma 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,
- 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 small, but vibrant and growing, department. Its staff includes one full-time Program Director, one full-time Clinical Supervisor, five full-time Therapists, and one part-time Program Assistant. 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. An understanding that services may be provided in-person at the office and via telehealth (telephone and virtual platforms).

Interns are ***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. 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.

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 may participate in group supervision and case consultation as available. They are expected to bring thoughtful reflection on their own clinical work (and the work of their peers, as applicable), presenting and responding to challenging and difficult cases and clinical issues.

Interns will have the opportunity to conduct 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 of their own design for adults and/or children.

If interested, each intern will also 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 quarterly meetings, trainings, and outreach activities. Interns will also have the opportunity to participate in other community coalitions, trainings, and outreach activities.

### **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. ☺

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!