CHILD & FAMILY CENTER

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY PRACTICUM PROGRAM



CHILD & FAMILY CENTER | 21545 CENTRE POINTE PARKWAY | SANTA CLARITA, CA 91350 | TEL (661) 259-9439 | FAX (661) 259-9658 | CHILDFAMILYCENTER.ORG



MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

WHY CHILD & FAMILY CENTER

We are excited that you are considering Child & Family Center for your training site. For over 50 years, Child & Family Center has continued to build on what our founders started, providing quality care and services to children and families in need. Our agency is deeply embedded within the community and has long and rich history with our community partners and other non-profit agencies providing early childhood services all the way to young adulthood and beyond. This opportunity gives you the wonderful opportunity to build you clinical skills in a truly community-based setting and collaborative agency with exposure to a full continuum of services and settings.

OUR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

With Child & Family Center, trainees work in various departments and programs within the agency such our outpatient mental health program, on-site services, early childhood mental health programs, domestic violence / intimate partner violence program, parenting classes and our substance use prevention and treatment services. You will gain exposure to the varied roles that clinicians play in community-based mental health settings.

LOOKING AHEAD WITH YOU

At Child & Family Center, you will find dedicated, caring and compassionate staff. We are a data-informed and community driven agency. We value growth, training, initiative, and innovation and strive to ensure a culture where learning is ongoing and embraced. We look forward to you being a part of our mission and journey.

Sincerely,

Nikki Buckstead

Nikki Buckstead
Chief Executive Officer
Child & Family Center



ABOUT THE CHILD & FAMILY CENTER

Child & Family Center ("C&FC" or "Agency") is dedicated to helping children, families, and adults to thrive and reach their full potential. Established in 1976 as St. Stephen's Special School, the Agency's founders saw a need to assist children with emotional, learning, and behavioral problems. Helping parents and caregivers learn better ways to parent children was a priority. Evolving into the Santa Clarita Valley Special Children's Center in 1985, counseling services were added for teenagers and their parents. Now known as the Child & Family Center, the Agency has grown into a provider of comprehensive prevention, early intervention, diagnostic evaluation, and therapeutic services for children, teens, adults, and families who live in the Santa Clarita Valley, Antelope Valley, and surrounding areas in Los Angeles County.

Our agency mission is: **Changing Lives. Healing Relationships. Helping People Thrive – Strengthening families today for stronger communities tomorrow.**

In addition, the Agency has a set of core values - Compassionate, Empowering, Impactful, Quality, and Trusted. These values are the defining principles the Agency is built on. The core values hold everyone to a higher standard and are the beacon that guide staff. The mission and the core values ensure all clients, and the community, receive excellent care and services that are client-centered and family-centered.

Child & Family Center helps thousands of children, their families, and the community by providing comprehensive prevention, early intervention, diagnostic evaluation and therapeutic services for children, teens, adults and families. Programs include:

- Individual, family, and group counseling
- Substance use prevention, education, and treatment
- School services
- Intensive in-home care
- Domestic violence / Intimate Partner Violence services, which includes a confidential shelter for bridge housing
- Parenting classes

The staff of mental health professionals includes adult and child psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and case managers who work in collaboration to provide the best possible care.

Our agency collaborates with school districts, social service agencies, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Los Angeles County Department of Children & Family Services, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, among others, to provide the best possible care for clients. The basic philosophy underlying all the Agency's programs is that early intervention and guidance in an individual's life can prevent more serious problems from developing.



THE TRAINING SETTING

Child & Family Center is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit, public-benefit corporation. The main campus is located in Santa Clarita, CA, with an outpatient clinic in Palmdale, CA; both located in Los Angeles County. The Agency is Medi-Cal and Drug Medi-Cal certified in the state of California, and a Medicare-eligible provider through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and have other various third-party funding arrangements to support the clients served.

Our agency is accredited by ***The Joint Commission***, is a member of the ***Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC)*** and has received the ***GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency*** and the ***Silver Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health***.

Dedicated to meeting the mental and behavioral health needs of children, adolescents, adults, and their families, a range of services are provided such as counseling, intervention services, and parent education. Professional training is offered to all staff, members of the community, and trainees. The Agency is data-informed and community driven. The Agency is committed to evidence-based practices, staff training and development, culturally and linguistically appropriate services, and continuous quality improvement.

Child & Family Center strongly values individual differences in its working, clinical, and learning environments. Celebrating individual and different perspectives is at the core of the Agency's mission. Every effort is made to create a climate in which all staff, trainees, and volunteers feel respected, comfortable, and in which success is possible and obtainable. An overall goal of the Program is working with clients, colleagues, and community members from various backgrounds. Trainees are expected to engage in reflection and consider different perspectives, as well as personal factors that may impact their work with clients through supervision, didactic trainings, and personal reflection.

The Agency and the Training Program supports individuality and different perspectives by providing training related to various populations, encouraging trainees to consult and collaborate with interdisciplinary staff members, and by challenging trainees to reflect on their own personal experiences and how these affect their work with clients.



Individuality and different perspectives are integrated in the following ways:

- The Agency's Cultural Awareness Team meets regularly. This Team focuses on initiatives to support the development and deployment of practical, experience-based knowledge and advances excellence through individuality and different perspectives across programs and services. Trainees have opportunities to participate in these meetings throughout the training year.
- The Agency offers a Bilingual Services Workgroup for all Agency providers. Trainees are provided with opportunities to attend and participate. This group meets to discuss experiences and challenges in providing care to bilingual clients and families.
- The Agency also has a Reading Club where staff members meet to read a book related to individuality and different perspectives. The group members collectively choose a book, share information, perspectives, and personal stories related to the chosen book. Trainees are given opportunities to attend and participate.
- A Helping the Helpers group is facilitated by Agency staff. This group meets to co-create a safe and brave space for clinicians and staff from all backgrounds to share personal experiences, create a circle of community support, and engage in authentic discussions about each individual's diverse lived experiences.

THE TRAINING PROGRAM

At Child & Family Center, our Training Program is committed to the development of passionate and skilled clinicians through clinical, team-oriented, real-world experience. While we aim for opportunities for retention post-graduation, our goal overall with the practicum program is to prepare the trainees to become employment-ready at any community mental health agency.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

A variety of formal structured training sessions are provided for practicum trainees, including an initial orientation where trainings related to the Agency and the training program's policies and procedures are reviewed.



Training opportunities may include:

- Agency electronic health record (EHR) system with integrated AI technology
- Clinical documentation required by third-party payers
- Utilizing the evidence-based practice, Managing and Adapting Practice (MAP)
- Didactic seminars
- Case Presentations

DIRECT SERVICE ACTIVITIES

MFT practicum trainees provide individual therapy, caregiver support sessions, family therapy, and have opportunities to provide some case management. Trainees will learn skills essential for employment, including trauma-informed treatments, and may gain exposure to evidence-based practice models such as managing and adapting practice (MAP), motivational interviewing, cognitive behavior therapy, and seeking safety. Efforts are made to ensure that trainees receive a varied caseload in terms of age, gender, culture, and diagnosis.

SUPERVISION

Each MFT trainee receives:

- A primary supervisor with one-hour of individual supervision each week
- Two hours of group supervision each week
- Additional supervision as necessary to support each trainee's clinical caseload and to facilitate their professional development and growth.

TRAINING YEAR LOGISTICS

Child & Family Center accepts trainees for practicum placement during the fall of each year with the training year beginning the first week of August. Practicum placements are a minimum of ten months; however, trainees may continue in the placement longer based on the requirements of their graduate program.



Trainee benefits:

- Child & Family Center is a hybrid workplace. Students may have opportunities to receive training in providing therapy services in person and via Telehealth.
- Two weeks (40 hours) leave time for a 12 month placement. Additional leave time may be provided dependent on the length of the placement agreement.
- Agency holidays during the training year
- Wellness Week off (between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day)
- Access to a therapy supplies including games, toys, and art supplies to be utilized in therapy sessions

MANDATORY DAYS/TIMES

Trainees are required to attend all orientation days, which may differ from their ongoing practicum schedule. This orientation includes administrative and clinical training.

Initial Orientation:
DATE: August 2, 2027 through August 6, 2027
TIME: 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

- The MFT Practicum requires a minimum of 20 hours in practicum per week.
- Each Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm are mandatory for training and group supervision.
- MFT Practicum trainees are expected to be in practicum three-days per week with at least two evenings until 7:00 p.m.

STIPEND

Child & Family Center does not currently offer a stipend for the MFT practicum placement. We offer an unpaid training program that is similar to what is given in a vocational school and is for the benefit of trainees.

Trainees do not displace regular employees but work under their close supervision. Additionally, the Agency derives no immediate advantage from the activities of trainees and there is no entitlement to wages for time spent in training or a job at the conclusion of the training period.



APPLICATION AND SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

Child & Family Center has training agreements with several accredited graduate programs in the greater Los Angeles area. Our agency begins accepting applications from MFT trainees enrolled in these affiliated graduate programs in February for Fall practicum placement. We are not accepting trainees for Spring placement currently.

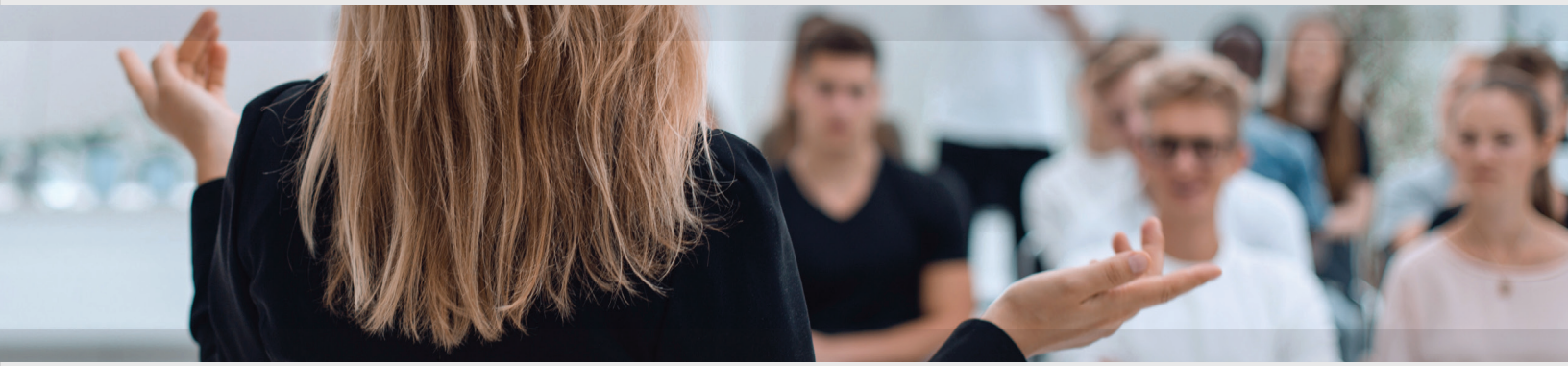
If you are interested in applying for practicum placement with Child & Family Center, please email the following information to ***StudentTraining@childfamilycenter.org***

1. A cover letter stating your area of interest, language ability and experience in community mental health
2. Resume or curriculum vitae
3. Include time availabilities for possible interviews in the email

Potential candidates will be contacted to set up an interview with the Training Program Team.

Potential applicants will be required to obtain full legal clearance from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and related California entities prior to the start of the practicum placement. Practicum placements are contingent upon obtaining full legal clearance and approval from C&FC Human Resources Department.

Child & Family Center is a hybrid workplace and the MFT Practicum Program is also a hybrid program. Telesupervision, telehealth, and virtual trainings are utilized, in addition to in person activities, by the Training Program. the use of telehealth and providing and receiving supervision through a synchronous audio and video format is a generally expected skill of entry-level mental health providers. Given the increasing use of telehewalth and telesupervision in the fields of psychology and mental health, Child & Family Center's Training Program believes it is important for trainees to have exposure to utilizing these platforms.



TRAINING PROGRAM MANAGERS

AMY WARREN, PSYD

Dr. Warren serves as a Program Manager for the Training Program at Child & Family Center where she has worked since 2016. Dr. Warren began her role with Child & Family Center as an Early Childhood Mental Health therapist and Early Childhood Metal Health consultant providing Mental Health Services to children birth to five as well as providing consultation and training to local preschool centers with a focus on supporting children's social emotional and behavioral health development. Key Clinical Supervisor responsibilities include managing contractual and operational relationships with universities, providing clinical supervision to all interns, overseeing intern training activities and experiences, and leading the Agency's Committee for Continuing Education & Professional Development. Dr. Warren is a licensed psychologist specializing in children's mental health with over 20 years of experience working with child and families in various settings. For the last ten years, she has provided trauma informed mental health services to children and families in community mental health settings. Dr. Warren earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Georgia and a Psy.D. from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. She completed her Internship at Children's Institute Inc., Watts Site, where she received specialized training in trauma-informed treatment and early childhood mental health. Dr. Warren completed training in various evidence-based practices, including Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Seeking Safety, Motivational Interviewing (MI), Incredible Years (IY) Social Skills Group Facilitator, Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) and Triple P.



KELLY DORSEY, PHD

Dr. Dorsey is a licensed psychologist with over 15 years of experience working as a mental health therapist and currently serves as a Program Manager for the Training Program at Child & Family Center. Dr. Dorsey received a BA degree from the University of California, Irvine, majoring in psychology and political science. She continued her studies in clinical psychology at the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University, Los Angeles, earning an MA and PhD. While at Alliant, Dr. Dorsey completed a practicum placement with The Children's Collective, which provided the opportunity to learn about community mental health services for preschool aged children and their families in Head Start preschools throughout South Los Angeles. In addition, Dr. Dorsey provided therapy to teenagers at an afterschool program at a south Los Angeles High School. She completed two internships at Child & Family Center and Verdugo Mental Health Center. At all three training placements, Dr. Dorsey received training and experience in psychological assessment. After graduation, Dr. Dorsey began working at Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services, providing therapy to children, teens, and families as well as conducting psychological assessments and providing consultation to other staff members regarding differential diagnosis and treatment planning. After becoming licensed, Dr. Dorsey began supervising psychology interns and unlicensed staff psychologists and developed an interest in working within a training department. Dr. Dorsey has also completed training in various evidence-based practices, including Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Seeking Safety, Crisis Oriented Recovery Services (CORS), Managing and Adapting Practices (MAP), Families Overcoming under Stress (FOCUS), Motivational Interviewing (MI), and Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP). In addition to managing the Training Program, Dr. Dorsey also serves as the Testing Program Manager and supervisor, provides clinical supervision to staff and students, and currently serves as a MAP trainer and supervisor for the Student Training Program..

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Program Managers, ***Amy Warren, Psy.D. & Kelly Dorsey, Ph.D.*** can be reached by email at: ***StudentTraining@childfamilycenter.org*** or by phone at ***(661) 259-9439***.

AGENCY INFORMATION

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