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*Together...breaking the silence, healing the hurt.*

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## **Child Advocate Internship Syllabus**

Harmony Home Children's Advocacy Center (HHCAC) is a trauma-informed, non-profit agency that focuses on bringing a light to the darkness, providing a safe place for children to break the silence of abuse and to start healing. Harmony Home would like to offer a 120-hour internship for child advocacy within the center. This internship is intended for students with majors in social work, teaching, human development, family studies, or other related fields and who have a strong desire to make our community a better place.

Each intern will spend time working within our Family Services Department providing support to children as they come for forensic interviews and/or mental health services.

The mission of Harmony Home Children's Advocacy Center (HHCAC) is to lessen the trauma and heal the hurt of abuse to children and their families through interviewing, therapy, victim services, investigation, and prosecution and to prevent child abuse through education and community awareness.

### **Mission**

Every child is free from abuse and lives in a safe and stable environment.

### **Vision**

Honesty, respect towards families and professionals, high ethical standards.

### **Values**

The primary goal of all Children's Advocacy Center's is to ensure that children are not further victimized by the intervention systems designed to protect them. HHCAC is dedicated to the development and provision of:

### **Goals**

- A comprehensive multidisciplinary, developmentally, and culturally appropriate, evidence-based response to the needs of children and their families.
- A neutral, child-friendly facility where forensic interviews and coordinated case planning can be conducted.
- Trauma- focused, evidence-supported medical and mental health treatment and a wide variety of victim services.
- Effective and coordinated case-management efforts based on open communication, information sharing, and collaborative decision-making.

- Comprehensive case tracking that monitors investigative, prosecutorial, child protection, medical, mental health, and victim advocacy services so that no child is left behind.
- More effective prosecution of child abuse cases.
- Cross- disciplinary and cross-cultural training as well as a discipline-specific continuing education that enhances professional practice.
- Promote child abuse prevention efforts through evidence-based curriculums, community training, and events.

## **Confidentiality**

HHCAC follows all state and federal confidentiality laws. It is imperative that identifying information discussed between HHCAC, and partner agencies not be divulged to any unauthorized person. Client and family confidentiality must be maintained at all stages and by all parties involved in the client's care. Each Intern will be expected to sign a confidentiality contract.

## **Qualifications**

Because Harmony Home is a safe place for children to be able to share their stories, Harmony Home requires that all prospective interns submit to a criminal and DFPS background check. All interns will complete required training at orientation and throughout the semester including, Darkness to Light, Confidence in Reporting, HIPPA, etc. Each intern should be in their final semester before graduating with their Associates, Bachelor's, or Master's degree.

## **Application**

All prospective interns must complete an internship application, submit a resume and two references and participate in the interview process. During the semester, the Intern will be under the supervision of Loralinda Cruz, Family Services Director.

Applications are due one month before the start of the semester.

- Fall; July 15
- Spring; December 15
- Summer May 15.

### **Course Work within the Internship**

## **Child Advocacy**

The Family Services Department is dedicated to reducing trauma and improving outcomes for children and their family members by providing advocacy and additional community support as part of the MDT response to child abuse. Family Advocates assist children and their non-offending family members with navigating the multiple systems involved in the CAC response by providing services and resources to ensure a consistent and coordinated, comprehensive network of support for each client.

## **Working with various Family Advocates; the Intern will**

- a. Provide safety, comfort, and theme related engaging activities for all children in the Family Room.
- b. Interact with children and family members as they attend therapy

sessions to maintain client relationships and engagement.

- c. Assist with the completion of Rapid Trauma Screenings with youth and process referrals for trauma-focused, evidence-supported mental health and specialized medical treatment, provided at HHCAC or off-site.
- d. Offer Youth Surveys regularly to appropriate clients to help gauge program and center safety and effectiveness.
- e. Observe and participate in in-house case review to communicate and discuss the unique needs of the child and family dynamics.
- f. Offer court education and support, including court orientation and accompaniment.
- g. Offer medical accompaniment to children as needed for sexual and physical abuse exams, with required state training.
- h. Assist in the coordination and execution of special client events and activities such as Birthday Acknowledgment, Back to School, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Kids in Court, Camps, etc.
- i. Work with the Mental Health Department to coordinate client and caregiver support groups.
- j. Maintain the client necessity and comfort closets and ensure necessary, basic needs items are made available to clients as needed.
- k. Reflect on personal values, biases and assumptions related to child abuse intervention and develop cultural competence in addressing diverse needs and perspectives.

910-C South Grant  
P. O. Box 3087  
Odessa, Texas 79760  
Phone (432) 333-5233  
Fax (432) 333-5257  
Web: [www.ohcac.org](http://www.ohcac.org)



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