



Student Counsellor – Violence Against Women Program (1 position) – Spring 2024

Program Summary

The aim of Family Service Toronto's Violence against Women (VAW) program is to promote non-violence and to work towards the eventual elimination of violence against women. The VAW Program assists women-identified people who have experienced abuse during the course of their lives. Abuse may have occurred in childhood, during a past relationship, or it may be an ongoing concern in a current relationship.

Position Summary

As a student under the VAW/THSP Program within our organization, the student will play a crucial role in supporting individuals through their journey of seeking priority housing and mental health support. This position is designed to provide practical experience to students pursuing a career in counseling, social work, or psychology, with a focus on those interested in supporting clients experiencing abuse or survivors of human trafficking seeking housing assistance, counselling and group therapy. The role is particularly geared towards providing support to clients applying for the Transitional Housing Support Program (THSP) and facilitating group sessions based on Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) for Spanish-speaking women.

This placement offers a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in both individual client support and group facilitation, with a focus on serving marginalized communities. Supervision and mentorship will be provided by licensed professionals, along with opportunities for professional development and learning.

Core Responsibilities

THSP Housing Application Assistance:

- Act as the first point of contact for clients inquiring about the THSP housing program.
- Provide information about the THSP, including program objectives, eligibility criteria, and the application process.



- Assist clients in determining their eligibility for the program through a structured screening process.
- Support clients in gathering and organizing all necessary documentation required for their THSP application, ensuring accuracy and completeness.
- Maintain confidentiality and sensitivity towards all client information and interactions.
- Support in Client Assessments:
- Assist in administering standardized assessment tools to evaluate clients' needs, strengths, and areas requiring support.
- Participate in the interpretation of assessment results under the supervision of a licensed professional, contributing to the development of personalized support plans.
- Ensure ethical and accurate documentation of all assessment procedures and outcomes.

Group Facilitation Support

- Co-facilitate DBT-based group therapy sessions specifically designed for Spanish-speaking women, under the guidance and supervision of a licensed practitioner.
- Assist in preparing session materials, ensuring they are culturally sensitive and appropriately tailored to the clients' needs.
- Provide support in managing group dynamics, encouraging participation, and maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all participants.
- Participate in debriefing sessions with the supervising practitioner to discuss observations, group progress, and any challenges encountered.

Counseling Duties:

- Under supervision, shadow and provide one-on-one counseling support to clients, employing empathy, active listening, and appropriate therapeutic techniques.
- Assist in developing and implementing individualized care plans based on client needs and goals, regularly reviewing and adjusting as necessary.
- Offer safety planning and referral support as needed, under the guidance of licensed professionals.
- Participate in regular supervision and team meetings, contributing insights and reflections on client progress and personal professional development.

Regular supervision and training will be provided to students to obtain relevant knowledge and skills to perform mentioned responsibilities.

Qualifications



- Enrollment in a social work undergraduate or graduate program, with a requirement for a practical placement.
- Proficiency in Spanish will be considered an asset to effectively communicate with and support our Spanish-speaking clients.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, with an ability to engage empathetically with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Basic understanding of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) principles and a willingness to learn more about group facilitation techniques.
- Demonstrated ability to maintain confidentiality and adhere to professional ethical standards.

Time Commitment

- Spring 2024
- 2-3 days/week
- April start date (or as determined by school requirements)

Location

- Locations:
 - o 128 Sterling St, Toronto, Canada M6R 2B7
 - o 355 Church St, Toronto M5B 0B2
 - o Remotely – A safe home office

Additional Information:

Level of Risk: High (opportunity to be alone with or exert influence over vulnerable people)

FST is committed to a policy of equity and inclusion. In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and FST's Access and Equity policy, accommodation will be provided in all parts of the recruitment process. Applicants need to make their needs known in advance.

We thank all applicants and will contact the individuals selected for an interview.