

# Children, Youth and Families Concentration Overview

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## Brief Description

The Children, Youth and Families (CYF) Concentration prepares students for direct and administrative positions working with children, youth and/or families. Students from the CYF Concentration are prepared to enter careers in a broad range of settings including, but not limited to, child welfare, schools, juvenile corrections, family court, family support agencies, domestic violence agencies, community development organizations. Students from this concentration may also prepare to enter policy or research careers focusing on child, youth, and family concerns. Required coursework emphasizes practices and policies applicable to publicly funded or non-profit agency settings that serve children, youth and families from lower socio-economic backgrounds. CYF students develop an understanding of how child development and family functioning are impacted by multiple systems over time. Students are asked to apply evidence-based decision-making skills to identify and apply empirically sound approaches to bringing about the desired change at the individual, family, agency, community or policy levels.

To assist students in planning, some example course packages follow the overall concentration description. This includes the school social work option, as well as examples for someone who might be interested in child welfare, a focus on youth, or working in the area of child and family policy.

## Competencies

Concentration courses are designed to prepare students to obtain competence in 10 areas. Competencies are measured by practice behaviors that are detailed on each course syllabi as appropriate to the content.

### 1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

Concentration course work builds on the content of *S15-5038, Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups* and *S15-5039, Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities, Evidence Based Practice Skills for BSW Graduates S15-5999* and the foundation practicum in the foundation curriculum. All required concentration courses and the concentration practicum support this competency.

### 2. Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

Concentration course work builds on the content of *S15-5015 Social Justice and Human Diversity*, *S15-5038, Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups* and *S15-5039, Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities, Evidence Based Practice Skills for BSW Graduates S15-5999* and the foundation practicum in the foundation curriculum. All required concentration courses and the concentration practicum support this competency.

### 3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

This content is integrated throughout the foundation and concentration courses and practica expectations.

### 4. Engage diversity and difference in practice.

This content is integrated throughout the foundation and concentration courses and practica expectations.

**5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice.**

This content is integrated throughout the foundation and concentration courses and practica expectations.

**6. Engage in research-informed practice and practice-informed research.**

Because of the focus on evidence-based practice at the Brown School, this content is integrated throughout the foundation and concentration courses and practica expectations.

**7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment.**

This content is integrated throughout the foundation and concentration courses and practica expectations.

**8. Engage in policy practice to advance social and economic well-being and to deliver effective social work services.**

Concentration course work builds on the content of *S15-5012, Social, Economic and Political Environment*, *S15-5015 Social Justice and Human Diversity*, *S15-5039, Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities*, and *S15-5040, Social Welfare Policies and Services* in the foundation curriculum. At the concentration level this content is supported in *S20-1011, Theoretical and Empirical Bases for Practice with Children, Youth and Families*, *S40-5771, Policy and Services for Children and Youth*, *S40-5842, Social Policy Analysis and Evaluation* and concentration field practicum.

**9. Respond to contexts that shape practice.**

Concentration course work builds on the content of *S15-5005 Research Methods for Social Work Practice*, *S15-5015 Social Justice and Human Diversity*, *S15-5038 Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups* and *S15-5039, Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities, Evidence Based Practice Skills for BSW Graduates S15-5999* and the foundation practicum in the foundation curriculum. This content is integrated throughout the concentration courses and practica expectations.

**10. Engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.**

Concentration course work builds on the content of *S15-5005 Research Methods for Social Work Practice*, *S15-5015 Social Justice and Human Diversity*, *S15-5038, Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups* and *S15-5039, Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities, Evidence Based Practice Skills for BSW Graduates S15-5999 S15-5040, Social Welfare Policies and Services* and the foundation practicum in the foundation curriculum. At the concentration level this content is supported for direct practice students by selecting two of *S31-4010, Social Work Practice in Early Childhood*, *S30-7325, Social Work Practice with Children in Families*, *S30-7326 Social Work Practice with Youth in Families* and either *S50-5067, Developing Programs for Children and Youth* or *S60-5016 Community Development Practice*. Administrative track content is supported by selecting two of: *S30-5703, Working with Groups on Problem Solving Tasks*; *S50-5019, Personnel Management and Supervision*; *S50 5020, Board Governance and Volunteer Management*; *S50-5030, Budgeting and Fiscal Management*; *S50-5066, Marketing, Resource Development and Community Relations*; *S50-5052, Leadership*,

*Planning, and Decision-Making.* Administrative track students must take *S50-5067, Developing Programs for Children and Youth*. Evaluation content is also found in the concentration evaluation courses: *S40-5842 Social Policy Analysis and Evaluation*, and *S50-5050 Evaluation of Programs and Services*. The content is supported for all students in the concentration field practicum.

## **CYF Concentration Required Courses/Objectives**

Direct practice track. This track is recommended for students choosing to focus on direct practice, but also students who focus on policy or research. This latter group of students will find it useful to have a background in direct practice both to broaden initial career options and to better understand the research and policy needs of the population. All CYF students begin by taking the S20 course that provides a family-based perspective on theories and issues that impact children and their caretakers. Next, direct practice students choose two of three practice methods courses: *S31-4010 Social Work Practice in Early Childhood* covering birth through age 4 years, *S30-7325, Social Work Practice with Children in Families* covering ages five to age 12 years and *S30-7326, Social Work Practice with Youth in Families* covering ages 12 to 18 years. These courses provide developmentally appropriate practice materials that focus on identifying common risk behaviors or disorders and building the capacity of children and youth and their families using evidence-based individual, parenting, and/or group level interventions. As concentration level courses, these classes are based on the assumption that students have already had exposure to major theories of child development. Direct practice students then choose a macro-level course to further complement their ability to address client system needs at multiple levels: *S50-5067, Developing Programs for Children and Youth* or *S60-5016, Community Development Practice*.

Administrative practice track Students opting to focus on administrative careers choose two of six courses from administrative methods classes *S30-5703, Working with Groups on Problem Solving Tasks*; *S50-5019, Personnel Management and Supervision*; *S50 5020, Board Governance and Volunteer Management*; *S50-5030, Budgeting and Fiscal Management*; *S50-5066, Marketing, Resource Development and Community Relations*; *S50-5052, Leadership, Planning, and Decision-Making*. Administrative track students must take *S50-5067, Developing Programs for Children and Youth*.

Other requirements All concentration students take the same policy course *S40-5771, Policy and Services for Children and Youth*, which provides an understanding of the economic and social policies that influence relationships between family members, between family members and organizations, and between family members and the broader community. Students learn to assess how policies do or do not promote social and economic justice for children, youth, and families and how to prepare a policy relevant product (e.g, policy brief, fact sheet, etc). Students in the Children, Youth and Families Concentration take one of two different evaluation courses: *S40-5842, Social Policy and Analysis*; or *S50-5050, Evaluation of Programs and Services*.

# **Children, Youth and Families Concentration Course Requirements**

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## **Social Policy**

S40-5771 Policy and Services for Children and Youth

## **Theory, Problems, and Issues**

S20-1011 Theoretical and Empirical Bases for Practice with Children, Youth and Families  
(Students enrolled prior to fall 2009 may use S20-1023 or S20-1024)

## **Practice Methods**

*Direct Practice students must take two of the following three courses.*

S31-4010 Social Work Practice in Early Childhood  
S30-7325 Social Work Practice with Children in Families  
S30-7326 Social Work Practice with Youth in Families

*In addition, Direct Practice students select one of the following:*

S50-5067 Developing Programs for Children and Youth  
S60-5016 Community Development Practice

*Administration students must take the following course:*

S50-5067 Developing Programs for Children and Youth

*In addition, Administration students must take two of the following:*

S30-5703 Working with Groups on Problem Solving Tasks  
S50-5019 Personnel Management and Supervision  
S50-5020 Board Governance and Volunteer Management  
S50-5030 Budgeting and Fiscal Management  
S50-5052 Leadership, Planning and Decision Making  
S50-5066 Marketing, Resource Development and Community Relations.

## **Evaluation**

*All students select one of the following:*

S40-5842 Social Policy Analysis and Evaluation  
S50-5050 Evaluation of Programs and Services

## **Practicum**

Five credits (600 hours) of practicum must be completed in an approved practicum agency that responds to the needs of children, youth and/or their families. Examples of services these agencies might provide include: working with emotionally disturbed, neglected or abused children and their families in the least restrictive environment enabling the children to remain in their families of origin; working with children and families in juvenile court settings, foster care and adoption services, and school-based services. Agencies can be either private or public and often have an interdisciplinary focus. The practicum site can offer learning opportunities in direct services or planning and administration. Students must work with diverse populations in practicum.

## **Careers: Specializations, Options, Course Packaging**

As there is a wide range of career options for students in the CYF concentration, some additional guidance is offered. Like all students, students in the CYF concentration may choose to add specializations in addition to their concentrations. Current offerings include Management and Research. Specializations are the same across concentrations and generally require students use most or all of their electives. CYF offers two means of pursuing management goals (1) administrative track; (2) Management Specialization. Although students can take both, students without prior practice experience should consider with their advisor the utility of having some direct practice training to better prepare them for later management. Similarly, students interested in the Research Specialization may wish to consider the direct practice track to better complement their research work and open up more career options.

Some career areas are best prepared for by careful packaging of required courses with electives and practica. First, because practicing in a school setting typically requires a separate certification by a state's Department of Education, the Brown School has developed a School Social Work option to help students meet these requirements. Next, two examples of how to package course work for specific interests are provided to help students consider how to choose among the many course offerings to best prepare them for their desired career. Additional examples can be found on the department web site under the CYF concentration.

### **School Social Work Option**

The School Social Work Option is a package of courses designed to prepare students to work in the public school sector as school social workers. The majority of states have a separate certification process for school social work that operates through the state's Department of Education. This option is designed to meet the requirements of the majority of states that offer this certification. If students know what state they hope to work in after graduation, they should check with that state's Department of Education to make sure there are no additional requirements.

#### ***Students should complete the following courses:***

S30-7815	Social Work in a Public School Setting
S30-7818	Social Work, Education and the Exceptional Child
S50-5067	Developing Programs for Children and Youth

#### ***Students are advised to complete one of the following courses:***

S30-5502	Applied Behavior Therapy
S30-5702	Applied Group Work Practice
S30-6011	Brief Outcome Therapy

#### ***Recommended Choices for Concentration Requirements:***

Direct Practice Track with:	
S50-5067	Developing Programs for Children & Youth.
S70	Concentration level practicum in a public school setting.

#### ***Required Electives for Certification:***

S30-7815	Social Work in a Public School Setting
S30-7818	Social Work, Education and the Exceptional Child

***Other Recommended Electives, Two of:***

S20-4011	Differential Diagnosis
S31-4010	Social Work Practice in Early Childhood (if not taken as a practice methods requirement)
S30-5502	Applied Behavior Therapy
S30-5702	Applied Group Work Practice
S30-6011	Brief Outcome Therapy
S30-9453	Substance and Alcohol Abuse

***Required field practica:***

Most states require a concentration practicum of at least 600 hours and be done in a public school setting.

***Other requirements***

Some states also have entry level exams. One of these will be a basic skills literacy and math exam. If required, there will also be an entry level school social work exam. A few states also require a portfolio. A handout regarding the portfolio required at some Illinois schools is available the Brown School Career Services office. Students are strongly encouraged Melissa Jonson-Reid, Professor, is also available to students with specific questions regarding school social work.

For further information on the school social work option, visit the [Career Specializations and The School Social Work Option](#) on Inside Brown. Contact Melissa Jonson-Reid, Ph.D., Goldfarb 355, (314) 935-4953, [jonsonrd@wustl.edu](mailto:jonsonrd@wustl.edu) with specific questions regarding school social work.

**Examples of Course Packaging**

The following two examples of packaging coursework are merely tools NOT official options or specializations. A direct practice and a policy oriented package are offered here.

**Child Welfare Direct Practice Package**

Students interested in both public and private sector practice with families involved with abusive or neglecting behaviors, as well as foster and adoptive families will find these courses useful in preparing for typical job tasks, trends in practice, and special issues.

***Recommended Choices Among Concentration Course Requirements:***

Direct Practice Track
S60-5016 Community Development Practice
S50-5050 Evaluation of Programs and Services
Concentration practicum in a public child welfare setting

***Recommended Electives:***

S31-5230	Child Welfare Practice
S31-4010	Social Work Practice in Early Childhood (if not taken as a practice methods course)
S20-4011	Differential Diagnosis
One of:	S30-9453 Substance and Alcohol Abuse
	S30-7001 Introduction to Family Therapy
	S20-1022 Domestic Violence: Theories, problems and issues

## S30-7815 Social Work in a Public School Setting

### **Child Advocacy/Policy Package**

This package is provided to assist students who are thinking about a policy career focused on child and family issues.

#### ***Recommended Choices for Concentration Requirements:***

Direct practice track  
S60-5016 Community Development Practice  
S40-5842 Social Policy and Analysis Evaluation  
Concentration level practicum in policy or advocacy setting

#### ***Recommended Electives:***

S20-5011 Economics of Social Welfare  
S60-5018 Organizing, Coalition Building and Lobbying  
S40-5660 Designing Sustainable Social Policies and Programs: A  
Systems Dynamic Approach  
One course specific to area of interest (e.g., domestic violence, child welfare, schools, etc.)

### **Clinical Option**

The Clinical Option of the Children, Youth and Family Concentration is designed to signal to others that a student has structured his or her elective courses to focus on the clinical practice of social work with a focus on children, youth and family. These students complete the requirements of the Children, Youth and Family concentration. In addition, they complete (1) a concentration field practicum that emphasizes the clinical practice of social work with children, youth and families and (2) at least 12 elective hours in clinical coursework using the framework provided below.

#### **6 hours of required coursework:**

S20-4011 Differential Diagnosis  
S30-9453 Substance and Alcohol Abuse

#### **At least 6 credit hours in courses that emphasize clinical methods or clinical practice with specific populations:**

S30-5502 Applied Behavior Therapy  
S30-5503 Cognitive Behavior Therapy  
S30-5702 Applied Group Work Practice  
S30-5902 Applied Psychosocial Therapy  
S30-6211 Treatment of Mental Disorders  
S30-7001 Introduction to Family Therapy  
S30-7206 Theories and Practice of Family Therapy  
S30-7502 Intervention Approaches for Treating Couples  
S31-5122 Intervention Approaches with Women  
S31-5230 Child Welfare Practice  
S65-5047 Pharmacology for Social Workers

Skills labs focused on evidence supported interventions (these labs will change and rotate as needed, but include *S81-5048 Motivational Interviewing*, *S81-5069 Dialectical Behavior Therapy*, *S81-5070 Interpersonal Therapy*).

## **Violence Prevention Option**

Students in the CYF concentration may also elect to combine coursework and electives to complete a certificate offered by the Brown Center for Violence and Injury Prevention (CVIP). Students may choose to complete this as a package of electives or can individualize. Dual degree students will have to individualize.

**Track I: Violence Prevention in Young Families:** Track 1 focuses on violence and injury prevention in young families. 12 hours of coursework is required including a course on early childhood (S31-4010), coursework on child maltreatment (S31-5230, Child Welfare Practice or PH S55-5325 Transdisciplinary Problem Solving: Child Maltreatment Prevention), coursework on intimate partner violence (S20-1022 Domestic Violence or S65-5034 Domestic Violence and the Law) and coursework on pediatric injury prevention (CMH-593-01 CRN 18279 - Public Health Approaches to Address Pediatric Injury and Violence). Please note that the course on pediatric injury prevention is taken at Saint Louis University School of Public Health and transferred in as an elective. Students are also required to complete a concentration practicum that is related to the track contents and attend some additional meetings and trainings to support leadership and career development in this area.

**Track II: Violence Prevention in Adolescence and Young Adulthood.** Track two focuses on a violence free transition to young adulthood. 12 hours of coursework is required including a course on adolescent development and social work practice (S30-7326 Social Work Practice with Youth in Families), coursework on intimate partner violence (S20-1022 Domestic Violence or S65-5034 Domestic Violence and the Law), coursework on youth risky behaviors and prevention (PH S55-53XX Transdisciplinary Problem Solving (TPS): Youth violence and health risk behaviors. And one additional course relevant to working with adolescents or young adults selected from (SWRK S31-5122 Intervention Approaches with Women WU LAW W74-641N Mediation Theory & Practice WU SWRK S50-5153 Juvenile delinquency: program strategies and intervention WU LAW W74-797F Civil Justice Clinic – Juvenile Delinquency (can also be MSW practicum site) S30-9453 SUBSTANCE AND ALCOHOL ABUSE, S31-5122 Intervention Approaches with Women; S50-5153 Juvenile delinquency: program strategies and intervention ; W74-641N Mediation Theory & Practice). Students are also required to complete a concentration practicum that is related to the track contents and attend some additional meetings and trainings to support leadership and career development in this area.

Interested students are encouraged to contact the Director of the CVIP, Melissa Jonson-Reid, Ph.D., Goldfarb 355, (314) 935-4953, [jonsonrd@wustl.edu](mailto:jonsonrd@wustl.edu) or Diane Wittling, Goldfarb 37, (314) 935-8129, [dwittling@wustl.edu](mailto:dwittling@wustl.edu).

## **Faculty Coordinator**

For further information on the Children, Youth and Families Concentration, contact Patricia L. Kohl, PhD., Goldfarb 349, (314) 935-7843, [pkohl@wustl.edu](mailto:pkohl@wustl.edu).