Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Child Advocacy Studies

Overview
The Certificate Program in Child Advocacy Studies is designed for professionals already working in the child protection field and wish to develop greater knowledge and skills, as well as individuals preparing for a career in this area.

Coursework
The Certificate Program in Child Advocacy Studies requires fifteen (15) credit hours beyond the Bachelor’s degree. The core curriculum is interdisciplinary (9 hours) and draws from various disciplines including Psychology, Criminal Justice and Sociology. The program will also have an elective option from multiple disciplines (3 hours) and a field project (3 hours). Graduates of this program will have a strong understanding of the theoretical and environmental issues that surround child abuse, evidence-based intervention strategies, and multidisciplinary approaches to prevention, advocacy, and treatment of child maltreatment victims and survivors. This curriculum is experiential with an emphasis on ethical and legal responsibility, and cultural sensitivity. The multidisciplinary framework will enhance professional skills in a variety of settings including law enforcement, behavioral health, healthcare, law and education.

Admission Criteria
- Baccalaureate degree
- GRE not required
- GPA of 2.5 in last 60 hours (3.0 preferred), or demonstrated field experience
- Application includes a personal statement and two letters of recommendation

Employment Opportunities for Graduates
South Carolina and Upstate agency professionals indicate a strong interest in hiring students with a post baccalaureate certificate in Child Advocacy Studies, as well as interest in the opportunity for existing employees to advance their careers with further educational opportunities in Child Advocacy Studies.
Up is much more than a direction or a place. It’s a way of approaching life and learning. It’s making the most of every challenge, and daring yourself to achieve more than you ever thought possible. That’s the kind of academic quality you’ll find at the University of South Carolina Upstate.

From the moment students step on campus, they feel the energy of a dynamic university. USC Upstate, a senior comprehensive public institution of the University of South Carolina, is one of the leading metropolitan universities in the southeast and has been ranked by U.S. News and World Report as one of the top five Comprehensive Colleges in the South.

USC Upstate is among the fastest growing universities in South Carolina - with a 330-acre campus in Spartanburg, junior- and senior-level commuter campuses in Greenville, and a campus for the George Dean Johnson, Jr. College of Business and Economics in downtown Spartanburg. Home to 6,000 students from 26 states and 17 countries, USC Upstate offers more than 40 degree programs, over 90 active student organizations on campus, as well as 12 nationally affiliated sororities and fraternities. The University fields 17 athletic teams—known as the Spartans—which compete in the NCAA Division I Atlantic Sun Conference.

The best adventures in life are the ones that are different from all the rest. You should expect no less from your college experience. That’s what we call the Up attitude… exploring the kind of new and surprising learning opportunities that, in the end, will truly set you apart from the pack.

The University of South Carolina Upstate.

Up is where we live.

www.uscupstate.edu

Required Courses
CAST 700: Perspectives in Child Maltreatment 3
CAST 701: System Responses to Child Maltreatment 3
CAST 702: Prevention and Intervention Strategies 3
CAST 798: Topics in Child Advocacy 3
CAST 799: Child Advocacy Project/Internship 3
Total Hours Required 15

Need and Demand for the Program
National and state research in child abuse shows consistent themes of inadequate training at the undergraduate and graduate level, along with a lack of experiential training in the field. The Child Advocacy Certificate Program is part of a national effort to end child abuse through education. Many professionals currently working in child protection hold Baccalaureate degrees that are not directly related to their field of work. Therefore, gaps exist in the knowledge base and level of expert training.

“A large body of research and the overwhelming experience of front line child protection professionals speak to the need to dramatically improve undergraduate and graduate training on child maltreatment. To this end, the Child Advocacy Studies degrees offered at the University of South Carolina Upstate provide rigorous, evidence based education that will empower future child protection professionals to excel in responding to all forms of child maltreatment.”

Victor Vieth, Executive Director Emeritus
Gundersen National Child Protection Training Center

The Center for Child Advocacy Studies
The Center for Child Advocacy Studies provides supportive resources as well as:

- Community Outreach
- Annual Conference
- Networking
- Community Resources
- Professional Education/Training
- Research

Policy - Advocate legislation and programs to promote healthy environments for children to end child abuse and neglect.

Student Profile
The Center of Child Advocacy Studies hosts an annual conference to educate professionals in child service fields, students and community members from the Upstate region, as well as statewide. With over 300 people in attendance each year, the objectives of the program are as follows:

- A greater understanding of the problem of child abuse and the serious impact on child development and the community
- Recognition of warning signs and understanding of prevention and intervention methods
- A fostering of cross collaboration among disciplines
- A call to action using learned tools
- National experts present on the most current best practices information and tools. Students are encouraged to attend.

Silent Tears Project • http://silenttearssc.org/
The Center for Child Advocacy Studies was invited to partner with the Julie Valentine Center and the National Child Protection Training Center (NCPTC) to study the responses to cases of child sexual abuse in the state of South Carolina. Silent Tears South Carolina collected information from child protection professionals in seven counties that were selected to represent South Carolina along with a statewide online survey. With information collected from more than 600 child protection professionals, this research was used to identify the strengths of the state in its response to cases of child abuse and to identify areas of improvement. The Center remains active serving on a statewide taskforce to oversee implementation of the recommended changes.