University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development
MSW Placement Opportunity

The division of Service Demonstrations at the University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development focuses on facilitating collaborations that bring research to practice by developing innovative programs and coordinating efforts between existing services. Projects span across multiple areas including prevention, child welfare, mental health, early education, family services, child development, parent leadership, advocacy, professional development.

Qualified students will:
- Be willing and able to work both independently and as part of a team
- Be willing and able to develop relationships with parents, service providers, funders, and policy makers
- Possess effective written and oral communication skills
- Think critically

Opportunities for COSA students exist in two projects. Interested students may be able to work on one or both of the following:

1. Pathways to Kindergarten Success (aka Ready Freddy™) builds community, school, and parent awareness about the importance of a quality transition to kindergarten for all children and families (www.readyfreddy.org). Based in several low-income neighborhoods in Pittsburgh, this project works to strengthen 1) parent involvement and leadership in their child’s education, 2) positive parent-school relationships and 3) sustainable partnerships between schools and communities. Students working on this project will have the opportunity to:
   a. Conduct outreach in the community via door to door canvassing, phone calls, and/or other effective communications strategies
   b. Attend and participate in community meetings to facilitate community collaborations or plan transition related events
   c. Build sustainable relationships between schools and community partners
   d. Design, coordinate, and evaluate various components of the project
   e. Help to develop and coordinate expansion of the project

2. Partnerships for Family Support provides training and technical assistance to 26 Allegheny County Family Support Centers (www.alleghenycountyfamilysupport.org). Family Support is a parent-governed, strengths-based network of child abuse prevention services run through the Department of Human Services. Services for families include home visiting, support groups, child development, goal planning, and parent leadership. Students working on this project will have the opportunity to:
   a. Build effective parent leadership and advocacy strategies, especially around budget and election issues
   b. Collaborate on continuous program improvement through enhanced communication, training, and technical assistance
   c. Design, coordinate, and evaluate various service elements available to families
   d. Plan and participate in county and state-wide events that strengthen relationships amongst parents, service providers, funders, and policy makers