

TAINA PEREZ

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Government professional and licensed clinical social worker with extensive experience in child protection and welfare services. Proven record for successfully overseeing investigations regarding concerns of abuse and neglect reported to the New York State Central Registrar. Successfully developed strategies to better supervise and enhance the approach of the specialized unit focused on child sex abuse and extreme physical abuse. Policy-driven advocate for the safety and wellbeing of New York City's most vulnerable youth population. Collaborative and decisive leader with excellent communication skills, analytical thinking, and a passion for creating innovative solutions. Works well both leading and being part of a team.

KEY AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Brief Solution Based Therapy/Intervention
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Youth Substance Abuse & Treatment
- Crisis Management
- Making decisions during high stress situations
- Co-occurring Disorders and Treatment
- Domestic Violence and the effects on Children and Families
- Safe TALK Suicide Alertness for Everyone Training
- Social Service Law
- Case Management
- Child Sexual Abuse – Protective Strategies
- Sexual Abuse Dynamics and Intervention
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Basics
- Substance Abuse and the effects on Children and Families
- Suicide Awareness and Prevention
- Child Abuse and Neglect
- #FosterCareAlum

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

New York City Administration Children's Services | New York, NY

June 2011-Present

Director of Peer Advocacy | Sabra Jackson Office of Advocacy (December 2022-Present)

- Strategic Leadership and Program Development:** Transform the Peer Advocacy Unit by assessing and refining advocate roles, increasing credentialed peer advocates from 25% to 75%. Develop and implement the unit's mission and vision statements, as well as referral requirements. Oversee day-to-day operations and ensure staff proficiency through formal coaching training (Building Coaching Competency).
- Initiative Management:** Spearhead the Peer Advocate Support Initiative, enhancing family peer advocacy through a structured liaison model. Strengthen collaboration between Peer Advocates, Parent Advocates, and community partners, aligning efforts with the agency's mission.
- Contract Oversight:** Co-manage a \$3 million Parent Advocate Initial Child Safety Conference program contract. Assist the Executive Director in refining data collection tools, training curricula, and evaluating program proposals. Review annual compliance reports to ensure alignment with initiative goals.
- Team Building and Training:** Lead monthly team meetings to foster collaboration with internal and external stakeholders. Build knowledge of government and community resources, integrating them into team operations. Design training curricula for new hires, achieving 100% participation in team meetings.
- Advocacy and Mediation:** Assess constituent needs, educate them on rights and responsibilities, and advocate on their behalf within ACS divisions and contracted service providers. Act as a mediator between ACS programs and external agencies.
- Staff Recruitment and Representation:** Participate in recruitment processes by interviewing and evaluating candidates for vacancies. Represent the Office of Advocacy at internal meetings, community resource fairs, public presentations, and other events.

New York City Administration Children's Services | New York, NY

Child Protective Specialist Supervisor II, Bronx Child Advocacy Center (June 2021-December 2022)

- Supervised Child Protective Units:** Managed a team of up to six Child Protective Specialists, ensuring appropriate coverage and adherence to federal, state, and local regulations.
- Facilitated Safety and Risk Assessments:** Attended Child Safety Conferences and Family Team Meetings to evaluate safety and risk factors, developing actionable plans to protect children from harm.
- Collaborated with Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT):** Coordinated with NYPD's Child Abuse Squad, forensic interviewers, medical professionals, attorneys, and family court services to address child abuse and neglect cases effectively.
- Provided Procedural Oversight:** Delivered administrative and procedural supervision to staff, ensuring compliance with child welfare laws and internal policies while fostering professional development.
- Enhanced Unit Performance:** Identified strengths and areas for improvement within the unit, implementing targeted interventions to resolve issues and reduce risks to children.

- **Developed Solutions for Complex Cases:** Designed creative solutions for case-related challenges, leveraging expertise in child protection to improve outcomes for families.
- **Promoted Quality Supervision:** Modeled effective communication, coaching, and leadership practices to support staff development and maintain high-quality service delivery. Increased staff morale by designing, planning and implementing the office's first ever Juneteenth celebration with my team.

Child Protective Specialist Supervisor II, Emergency Children's Services (May 2019-June 2021)

- Led and supervised a team of up to 5 Child Protective Specialists, ensuring comprehensive coverage and high-quality service delivery in emergency children's services.
- Collaborated with law enforcement agencies on complex cases, demonstrating strong liaison and communication skills essential for the Associate Commissioner role.
- Demonstrated exceptional leadership in high-pressure environments, managing challenging shifts during weekends, overnights, and holidays, aligning with the need for adaptability and resilience in Community Based Strategies.
- Conducted thorough case reviews and developed strategic action plans, showcasing analytical skills crucial for program evaluation and improvement in prevention services.
- Provided expert guidance on casework practices and policy implementation, reflecting the ability to communicate and implement agency missions across divisions.
- Engaged in regular supervision with senior management, demonstrating commitment to professional development and alignment with organizational goals, which is vital for the Associate Commissioner position.

Child Protective Specialist Supervisor II, Brooklyn (August 2016-May 2019)

- Supervised a Child Protective Unit, managing up to five staff members, including specialized training and transitional units, and provided case coverage as needed.
- Reviewed case documentation and developed tailored action plans to address safety and well-being concerns for children and families.
- Provided ongoing guidance to staff regarding casework practices, compliance with new policies, and effective implementation of interventions.
- Attended Child Safety Conferences, collaborating with stakeholders to design and implement appropriate safety interventions.
- Ensured timely submission of assessments and investigation conclusions in adherence to agency deadlines.
- Conducted weekly conferences to review caseloads, assess progress, and refine action plans for each case.
- Participated in bi-weekly supervision meetings with the Child Protective Manager to discuss unit performance, strategic goals and professional development.

Child Protective Specialist II, Brooklyn (October 2013 – August 2016)

- Led comprehensive child welfare investigations to assess safety and risk, ensuring alignment with child protection standards.
- Conducted detailed assessments of priority concerns, including mental health, domestic violence, and substance abuse, to inform strategic interventions.
- Developed and implemented evidence-based safety and service plans tailored to family needs, fostering risk reduction and child well-being.
- Facilitated family team meetings to address safety concerns and collaboratively design solutions with stakeholders.
- Utilized data-driven approaches to identify developmental delays in children and coordinated referrals for appropriate services.
- Provided crisis intervention counseling to individuals and families, leveraging trauma-informed care principles.
- Ensured compliance with legal mandates by filing petitions in Family Court and delivering expert testimony based on investigative findings.
- Maintained operational excellence under high-pressure situations, making critical decisions to ensure child safety.

Child Protective Specialist II, Staten Island (June 2011 – October 2013)

- Directed child welfare investigations with a focus on risk assessment and the development of sustainable solutions for families.
- Partnered with multidisciplinary teams to create and monitor safety plans that adhered to NYC child welfare policies and standards.
- Conducted removals of children when necessary, ensuring compliance with legal protocols and prioritizing their safety.
- Collaborated with community-based resources to connect families with preventive services aligned with identified needs.
- Identified systemic issues such as mental health challenges or domestic violence within families and developed targeted responses.
- Provided leadership in crisis situations by implementing immediate interventions that minimized harm while maintaining composure under pressure.
- Strengthened service delivery by filing court petitions grounded in thorough evidence collection and analysis.

Brooklyn Counseling Services | Brooklyn, New York

June 2023-February 2026

Clinical Social Worker/Psychotherapist

- Conduct comprehensive intake sessions to develop detailed biopsychosocial assessments and mental health status exams, ensuring precise and thorough documentation.
- Apply DSM-5 diagnostic criteria to deliver accurate, culturally sensitive mental health diagnoses tailored to individual patient needs.
- Provide psychotherapy services to children, adolescents, and adults with diverse mental health conditions, utilizing evidence-based modalities such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). Integrate approaches including solution-focused therapy, trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, strengths-based frameworks, and coaching techniques.
- Design and implement individualized treatment plans aligned with clients' goals, leveraging Socratic questioning to support goal identification and progress tracking.
- Maintain compliance with NASW Code of Ethics by completing case note documentation within a strict 48-hour timeframe.
- Participate in weekly clinical supervision to enhance expertise in clinical social work and deepen proficiency with AccuMed Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems.

- Develop and facilitate culturally responsive mental health support groups tailored to community needs.

Crasmere Mental Health Services | *Staten Island, New York*

December 2019-June 2023

Clinical Social Worker/ Psychotherapist

- Conducted intake sessions to develop comprehensive biopsychosocial assessments and mental health status exams, ensuring accurate and thorough documentation. Recognized for exemplary reporting skills, with reports used as training samples for new therapists, improving data collection and documentation standards.
- Applied DSM-5 guidelines to provide preliminary diagnoses for psychiatric evaluations. Promoted to author specialized clinical assessment reports for bariatric surgery, Medicaid, workers' compensation, and other specialized needs.
- Delivered psychotherapy services to children, adolescents, and adults with diverse mental health diagnoses using evidence-based modalities such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT). Integrated generalist practice approaches, including solution-focused therapy, trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, strengths-based perspective, and coaching techniques.
- Developed individualized treatment plans tailored to clients' goals, employing Socratic questioning to facilitate goal identification and progress.
- Ensured timely completion of case note documentation within a 5-day deadline while maintaining compliance with NASW Code of Ethics standards for case record management.
- Collaborated closely with psychiatrists to coordinate comprehensive care plans addressing clients' mental health needs.
- Referred clients to appropriate community resources and external agencies as necessary to support holistic care.
- Participated in weekly clinical supervision sessions to enhance professional skills and knowledge in clinical social work. Accumulated over 3,000 hours of direct patient contact and more than 100 hours of clinical supervision.

Integrity Senior Services | *New York, NY*

June 2016-May. 2021

Geriatric Psychotherapist

- Conducted comprehensive biopsychosocial assessments and mental health status examinations for older adult clients, including those with cognitive impairments
- Provided specialized psychotherapy to seniors with complex medical conditions, including Alzheimer's disease and related dementias
- Developed person-centered treatment plans tailored to each older adult's unique needs, preferences, and cultural background
- Maintained accurate and timely clinical documentation, including progress notes and treatment plans
- Collaborated effectively with multidisciplinary teams, including geriatric psychiatrists and healthcare providers, to ensure holistic care for older adults
- Facilitated access to community resources and support services for elderly clients and their caregivers
- Participated in regular clinical supervision to enhance skills in geriatric mental health care

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE & AFFINITY LEADERSHIP

New York City Administration for Children's Services – Employee Resource Groups

African American Heritage Committee – Lunchtime Crochet with Ms. Cynthia Covington (LC3)

- Member, 2023–present; Co-Chair, 2025–present. Coordinate community-based crochet projects, teach basic crochet skills to employees to promote self-care and creativity in the workplace, and develop events that showcase the talents and work of group members.

Latino Heritage Alliance (LHA)

- Member, 2022–present; Co-Chair, 2025–present. Lead and support the development of programming and agency-wide events that honor Latino heritage and culture, including Latino Heritage Month activities.

Racial Equity & Cultural Competence Committee (RECC)

- Member, 2025–present. Policy & Legislation Subcommittee Member, 2025–present: Review proposed and existing policies to assess equity implications and advocate for transparent processes, including opportunities for public comment in policy development.

GRADUATE FIELD PLACEMENTS

The Leadership Program | *New York, NY*

December 2013- February 2015

At-Risk Youth Mentor

- Utilized concepts of attachment theory to develop healthy relationships with others
- Addressed educational and behavioral issues in school
- Provided one to one mentoring sessions on a weekly basis
- Conducted daily check-in with a caseload of 25 students
- Conducted group and individual supportive counseling
- Assisted with setting goals and developing action plans
- Assisted with utilizing Problem-solving Model for unforeseen obstacles to goals
- Assisted students in identifying their spheres of influence
- Assisted with reintegrating students through education
- Counseled students on environment, familial and personal issues, and concerns

Non-Traditional Employment for Women | *New York, NY*

September 2010 – June 2011

Case Management Intern

- Conducted intake interviews and follow up appointments when necessary
- Made follow up phone calls to pending candidates
- Assisted students/candidates with any barriers that may interfere with their training
- Made referrals for candidates, students, and graduates to agencies for issues that may be hindering their success, case management of each class that starts

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

New York City Administration Children's Services | New York, NY

Practicum Instructor for ACS Professional Development Program (September 2021-Present)

- Mentor and guide various ACS employees who are graduate level MSW students in field training to advance underlying social work code of ethics.

Crisis Text Line | Remote

Crisis Counselor (April 2023 to Present)

- Providing remote crisis intervention and emotional support via text messaging, utilizing active listening and problem-solving skills to help individuals in distress.

National Association of Social Workers – New Jersey Chapter | New Jersey

Continuing Education Approval (CEA) Collaborative Reviewer (February 2024 to Present)

- Evaluate and approve social work continuing education courses to ensure quality, relevance, and compliance with state licensing requirements.

National Association of Social Workers – New Jersey Chapter | New Jersey

Chapter Committee on Nomination and Leadership Identification (July 2024 to Present)

- Identify and select qualified candidates for leadership positions within the organization, ensuring a diverse and competent pool of nominees for various roles.

America Needs You | New Jersey

Mentor/Coach (July 2024 to Present)

- Provide one-on-one mentoring and career coaching to first-generation college students to support their professional development and academic success.

100 Hispanic Women NJ Program | New Jersey

Board Member (September 2024 to Present)

- Contribute strategic guidance and oversight to advance the organization's mission of empowering Latina women through education, professional development, and community service.

CSA Alliance| Youth to Adulthood Transitional Program | New Jersey

Executive Board Member – Director of Welfare Programs & Secretary (September 2024 to Present)

- Oversee welfare programs and managed administrative duties to support at-risk youth transitioning to adulthood.

Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey | Bloomfield, New Jersey

Daisy Troop Co-Leader (September 2024 to Present)

- Lead weekly meetings and activities to help young girls develop leadership skills, build confidence, and engage in community service.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Social Work Student | The University of Alabama | Tuscaloosa, Alabama | Concentration: Advance Clinical Practice

Masters, Social Work | Fordham University | New York, New York | Concentration: Community Based Practice and Leadership

Bachelor of Arts, Sociology and Speech Communication | SUNY Potsdam| Potsdam, NY | Honors: *Cum Laude*

LICENSES & CERTIFICATIONS

Licensed Clinical Social Work | New York & New Jersey

SIFI Certified
Crisis Counselor
ChildFirst Forensic Interviewing
Sexual Abuse Dynamics & Interventions
DC 37 Lilian Roberts Women's Leadership Academy
NYC ACS Leading & Exploring through Accountability & Development (LEAD)

AWARDS & HONORS

Distinguished Service Award: Ensuring Firsthand Experience Guide Our Work
NYC Administration for Children's Services (December 2023)

Alpha Kappa Delta: International Sociology Honor Society
SUNY Potsdam (May 2010)

Lambda Pi Eta: National Communication Honor Society
SUNY Potsdam (May 2010)

Recipient of Various Academic Achievement Awards Scholarships and Honors from:

- Sheepshead Bay High School
- SUNY Potsdam
- Mercy First Foster Boarding Home
- Fordham University

PUBLICATIONS

Perez, T. (2009). 13 Ways to Listen to a Man Snore. In SUNY Potsdam's North Country

Perez, T. (2025). Administration & Leadership: Director of Peer Advocacy. In M. Sage & L. I. Hitchcock (Eds.), *101 things to do with a social work degree* (pp. 82-84). We Social Work, LLC.

Speaking Engagements & Presentations

- Panelist, "Voices of Progress: Honoring Roots, Building Careers," Hispanic Heritage Month CityTalk, DCAS & NYC Partner Agencies.
 - Participated in a citywide panel highlighting Hispanic leaders, sharing career insights and the impact of heritage and leadership in public service, New York, NY | October 3, 2025
- Co-Facilitator & Presenter, "Social Workers as Advocates: Navigating the Current Sociopolitical Climate" ACS Professional Development Program Social Work Conference, New York, NY | March 22, 2025
 - Collaborated with Dr. Melba Butler to lead a multidisciplinary workshop on advocacy, policy impact, and the NASW Code of Ethics for a diverse audience of social workers. Presented on practical strategies for turning compassion into action, the complexities of current policy changes, and effective advocacy approaches with children and families.
- Featured Speaker, Emblem Health Community Engagement – Topic: Intimate Partner Violence, New York, NY | April 2024
 - Collaborated with the Emblem Health Crown Heights team to lead an in-depth discussion on intimate partner violence, distinguishing it from domestic violence and exploring the Power & Control Wheel as well as the Cycle of Abuse. By sharing practical knowledge and expertise, we empowered the community to better recognize, address, and prevent intimate partner violence.
- Facilitator & Speaker, "From Case Notes to Capstones: Developing Courageous Child Protective Specialist Social Workers Through Field Instruction by Building Resilience Through the merger of Theory and Frontline Practice" New York State Social Work Education Association 58th Annual Conference, Saratoga Springs, NY | November 5th 2025
 - This roundtable explored how field instruction can cultivate resilient, courageous Child Protective Specialist social workers by intentionally bridging social work theory with the complex realities of frontline CPS practice. Participants discussed strategies to transform routine case documentation into opportunities for critical reflection, integrating trauma-informed, anti-oppressive, and family-centered approaches into both field supervision and capstone-level learning experiences.
- Co-Presenter, ACS Second Annual Parent Advocate & Community Ambassadors Retreat – Honoring Lived Expertise, Engaging in Difficult Conversations, New York, NY | December 5th, 2025

- Developed and co-facilitated a skills-based workshop for Advocates/Ambassadors focused on navigating challenging interactions in child welfare settings, enhancing communication, conflict management, and collaboration with clients and professionals holding differing perspectives, New York, NY