

MICHELLE TOPAL, MSW, LCSW



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EDUCATION

- 1994 | University of North Carolina. Masters of Social Work.
Honors Project: Focus Groups & Developed MSW Human Sexuality Curriculum.
- 1985 | State University of New York at Purchase. Bachelor of Arts
Honors Thesis: Sociology, Women's, Sexuality & Gender Studies

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

- 4/17-7/19 | **ADVOCACY CHAIR / CLINICAL ADVOCATE** - *North Carolina Society for Clinical Social Work (NCSCSW) and NC National Association of Social Workers (NASW).*
- Attend state wide committees, including Joint Insurance Committee and Professional Assoc Council, to represent clinical social workers and their clients to help shape and implement state policy, practice and legislation, including talking with various stakeholders. Write position paper and mental health provider sign on letter in support of banning conversion therapy and partner with Born this Way to develop press release for this campaign.
- 5/06-Present | **PSYCHOTHERAPIST & GROUP PRACTICE OWNER & BUSINESS CONSULTING-**
Change for Living Counseling PLLC, Triangle Counseling Consultants & Raleigh Counseling Collaborative- Raleigh & Durham, NC
- Psychotherapist specializing in the needs of those along the gender and sexuality continuum, including those who identify as LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming, adolescents, families, parents, and couples. Group practice owner and psychotherapist providing business and clinical consulting, group practice and office administration, practice, policy/procedure program, manage staff, marketing and website development, hiring and supervising of employees and contractors, and monitoring or ethical and legal compliance.
- 4/05-5/06 | **PSYCHOTHERAPIST** - *Carolina Partners in Mental Health, LLC, 1055 Dresser Ct., Raleigh.*
- Provide individual and family therapy to adults, children, couples and families in private outpatient clinic. Conduct intake evaluations, assign DSM diagnosis, develop treatment plans, complete necessary paperwork, monitor and evaluate treatment goals. Provide case management services.
- 9/04-4/05 | **SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISOR** - *NC Behavioral Health Services, Raleigh NC*
- Develop and implement all clinical services at newly funded day treatment program for adolescents, and other clinical services at alternative school, including program materials, policies, and behavioral system. Provide individual/group/family treatment to adolescents at alternative school. Provide psychotherapy services, including psychiatric evaluations and individual/family/group treatment at outpatient mental health clinic for clients of all ages/backgrounds. Provide child and family treatment to mother's and their children in substance abuse recovery program. Assist with contract and grant management and writing. Supervise staff.
- 4/03-9/04 | **TEAM LEADER/MANAGER** – *Telecare Durham ACTT, Durham NC*
- Manage daily operations at community based program for 108 SPMI clients. Supervision to seven clinicians, including RN. Provide individual, family and group therapy, case management and crisis/triage to clients. Develop community resources. Liaison with other agencies. Chart review and audits to maintain Medicaid, HIPAA and corporate compliance. Shift management. Interview, train, manage and evaluate staff. Maintain agency resources. Lead clinical meetings and oversight of all clinical operations. 24 hour O/C supervision
- 12/99-4/03 | **CLINICAL CARE MANAGER** - *Value Options, RTP, N.C.*
- Provide clinical management of out patient and higher levels of care for managed care company. Review clinical care provided to a variety of clients throughout country to ensure clinically appropriate/effective treatment to members with complex mental health and substance abuse issues, including North Carolina Medicaid clients.

8/98-
10/99

REGIONAL DIRECTOR - *Institute for Family Centered Services (IFCS), Raleigh, N.C.*

Manage regional operations of intensive in-home family therapy program. Annual operating budget of \$700,000. Clinical supervision of up to fifteen Master's level clinicians. Coordinate all services. Review all documentation to ensure Medicaid compliance. Manage all financial aspects of five county region, including billing, grant writing, program development and expansion, diversification of funding, and marketing. Recruit, hire and train all new staff. 24 hour O/C supervision of staff and program.

9/94-
7/98

PROGRAM COORDINATOR - *Wrenn House/Homesteaders, Haven House, Raleigh*

Provide clinical supervision to direct care staff of two crisis intervention programs; runaway/homeless/crisis shelter for youth and their families, and in home family preservation program. Programs included 24 hour crisis phone line, providing basic needs for youth in shelter, and individual and family counseling. Interview, hire, train and evaluate staff. Provide direct care to youth and families, including treatment planning and case management. Maintain shelter facility. Ensure programs compliance with requirements of funding sources, including Medicaid. Coordinate care with DSS, CPS and juvenile court.

1994
Summer

SOCIAL WORK INTERN/THERAPIST - *Johnston County Mental Health Center, N.C.*

Provide individual and family therapy to children and families in community child mental health center. Inpatient and outpatient caseload. Conduct initial screenings, biopsychosocial assessment, and determine DSM diagnosis. Develop treatment plans, monitor and evaluate treatment goals. Provide case management service. Community outreach education about mental health issues. Train staff and develop procedures to provide services to deaf clients, as well as advocate for the services of LGBTQ clients in rural community.

10/94-
10/99

PROGRAM DIRECTOR/GROUP FACILITATOR - *A Safer Place Youth Network (ASPN), Raleigh NC*

Assist with creation, development and facilitation of supportive group for first local program helping LGBTQ+ youth ages 14-21. Provide phone information to all consumers, including young people and parents. Program development and management, including, outreach and educational materials, training materials/program, volunteer recruitment, training and coordination, fundraising activities, program policies and procedures. Also plan, supervise and coordinate youth activities, collaborate with other community agencies and respond and coordinate education and outreach activities in the community.

Serve on Board of Directors of Triangle Community Works [TCW], who's mission was to become the LGBT Center of Raleigh.

1993
Summer

SOCIAL WORK INTERN - *AIDS Service Agency, Raleigh, N.C.*

Assist with providing client services and agency evaluation for community based non-profit agency serving people with HIV. Develop tools and conduct community needs assessment to assist agency in three year strategic plan. Provide client intake, assessment, crisis intervention, short term counseling, case management and advocacy for case load of agency clients. Assist with community education and volunteer training programs. Participate in staff and agency board meetings. Develop and implement agency's procedures and staff training to ensure services to the deaf.

5/88-
10/93

STD HOTLINE SHIFT SUPERVISOR and HIV INFORMATION SPECIALIST -

American Social Health Assoc (ASHA) & Centers for Disease Control's National AIDS & STD Hotlines, RTP, N.C.

Supervised and evaluated information specialists on CDC national information and referral hotline providing information about STIs, including HIV. Trained in supervisory skills to manage daily activities of hotline. Provide back up to line workers on difficult calls. Interview, hire and train all new staff. Research and develop information on sexually transmitted diseases for CDC's hotline. Design and develop training program and manual. Data base upkeep. Provide information about STI's to publications providing sexual health information, including Our Bodies, Our Selves and STI chapter in CDC book of disease information.

9/86-
9/90

WAIT PERSON - *Irregardless Café, Morgan Street, Raleigh, NC.*

6/85-
7/86

CHILD CARE WORKER- *Jewish Care Assoc, Pleasantville Cottage School Residential Treatment, and New York Foundling Hospital, St. Agathas Children's Group Home, N.Y.*

ADDITIONAL SKILLS:

Website development/maintenance; HTML/CSS & Wordpress & SEO. Marketing, Business & program development, administration and policy.

Recent Relevant Workshops/Training:

- 2016 - SouthEastern Transgender Health Summit (3 day conference)
 - Beyond Tolerance: Affirmative Therapy for LGBTQ Individuals
 - Provided 2 Lunch & Learns to NC NASW Members re: Working with LGBTQ Clients & Ethical Practice
- 2017 - NC Sexual Health Conference ASHA (2 day conference)
- 2018 - LGBTQ Clients: Clinical Issues & Treatment Strategies
 - LGBT Youth: Clinical Strategies to Support Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
 - Transgender & Gender Non-Conforming Clients: Clinical Issues & Treatment
 - Best Practices in Working with Transgender/Gender Non-Conforming Clients (NCSCSW)
- 2020 - 2 Day Symposium: Unraveling the Acronym - LGBTQ+ Experiences & Subcultures Trans Youth Symposium
- 2021 - Complex Ethical Challenges When Current Events & Politics Enter the Therapy Room
 - Working with LGBTQ+ Population: Best Practice
 - 4 Day Symposium: Trans Youth Care Symposium
- 2022 - Honoring Diversity: Strategies for Adapting Evidence-Based Interventions
 - The Urgency of Affirming Advocacy for Trans & Gender Expansive People
 - Our Voices Matter: Upholding the Dignity & Worth of LGBT Older Adults
 - Impacts of Spiritual Violence & Religious Abuse on the Lives of LGBTQIA+ People: An Interdisciplinary Reflection
 - The Resilience of Connection & Belonging for LGBTQ+ Individuals & Families
 - Clinical SW Practice Implications on the New Standards of Care by WPATH
- 2023. - Let's Talk About Sex
 - Addressing Social Injustice in SW Practice: Clinical Advocacy Model
 - Older LGBTQ: Our Voices Matter
 - Impacts of Spiritual Violence & Religious Abuse
 - CBT Through CRT Lens
 - The Reliance of Belonging for LGBTQ
 - New WPATH Standards of Care 8
 - Outside In to Inside Out: New Client-Centered Framework for Thinking About Gender
 - 10 Things to Know About LGBTQ+ & Schools
- 2024 - Yale LGBTQ-Affirmative CBT Training Program (12 Hrs/12 Weeks)