

# **Karen Leaf**

**Adjunct Assistant Professor Dept. of Adult Mental Health and Wellness at USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work**

Los Angeles, CA, US

Karen Leaf is an expert in chronic mental illness, older adults, and emotionally disturbed children and adolescents.

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## **Biography**

KAREN LEAF joined the faculty in 2009, serving as an adjunct clinical assistant professor for field education. A licensed clinical social worker with more than 30 years of experience, she has worked in a diverse array of agencies and organizations with multiple populations, including the chronically mentally ill, older adults, and emotionally disturbed children and adolescents.

For 13 years, Leaf was a field instructor at Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles, the oldest and one of the largest nonprofit organizations in Los Angeles. In this role, she coordinated an internship program for Master of Social Work students, marriage and family therapy trainees and interns, and nonprofit management students. In 2009, she received the Dora and Charles Mesnick Award for Excellence in Senior Programming from the Jewish Communal Professionals of Southern California for her innovative work as director of the Valley Storefront Senior Center of Jewish Family Service. In 2011, she received the Master Field Instructor Award from the School of Social Work's field education department. The UCLA Department of Social Welfare also appointed her a clinical instructor for her years of service as a field instructor.

Leaf has been a member of the Geriatric Social Work Education Consortium since 2005, and from 2008 to 2014 was a collaborative partner for the "Promising Practices: Shaping the Future of Mental Health and Aging" conference. She presented workshops at the American Society on Aging National Conference in 2008 and 2010, and at the Empowering Relative Caregivers Conference in 2008.

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## **Industry Expertise**

Education/Learning, Health Care - Providers, Health and Wellness, Mental Health Care, Health Care - Services

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## **Areas of Expertise**

Emotionally Disturbed Children, Chronic Mental Illness, Older Adults

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## **Education**

**University of Southern California**  
M.S.W.

**University of California, Los Angeles**  
B.A.

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## **Accomplishments**

### **Master Field Instructor Award**

USC School of Social Work Field Education Department

### **Dora and Charles Mesnick Award for Excellence in Senior Programming**

Jewish Communal Professionals of Southern California

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