

Jennifer M. Tanis, PhD, LMSW

Assistant Professor

School of Social Work, Grand Valley State University

[she/her/hers]

Education

PhD	2024, Michigan State University, School of Social Work , East Lansing, MI Dissertation Title: <i>The role of state-level paid family leave for infant maltreatment prevention</i>
MSW	2014, Grand Valley State University, School of Social Work , Grand Rapids, MI Phi Alpha Honors Society Maternal and Child Health Fellow
BA	2009, Michigan State University, Family and Child Ecology , East Lansing, MI Major: Family and Community Services Minor: Child and Youth Development

Academic Appointment

2026 – Present	Assistant Professor Grand Valley State University, School of Social Work, Grand Rapids, MI
2022 – 2026	Assistant Professor of Social Work Hope College, Sociology and Social Work Department, Holland, MI
2021 – 2022	Adjunct Instructor Grand Valley State University, School of Social Work, Grand Rapids, MI

Professional Licensure

Licensed Master Social Worker, State of Michigan, Clinical, #6801096681

Research Interests

Child Maltreatment Prevention; Child Welfare; Family Well-being; Reproductive Justice; Maternal and Child Health; Maternal Mental Health; Social Work Education

Honors & Awards

2026	Building Healthy Relationships to End Violence (BHREV) Bridge Lab Participant Grand Challenges of Social Work
2025	Outstanding Paper Award National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect
2024	Outstanding Social Work Doctoral Dissertation Award – Nominee Society for Social Work and Research
2022	NDACAN Summer Research Institute Participant Cornell University
2021-2022	Leadership Institute Coordinator Fellowship

	Graduate School, Michigan State University
2021	Emerging Engagement Scholarship Workshop Participant Engagement Scholarship Consortium
2021	Fragile Families Summer Data Workshop Participant Columbia Population Research Center, Columbia University
2021	Undergraduate Research Mentor of the Year Nominee Undergraduate Research, Michigan State University
2020	Hiram E. Fitzgerald Engaged Scholar Fellowship Graduate School, Michigan State University
2014	Maternal and Child Health Fellowship School of Social Work, Grand Valley State University
2012-2014	Dr. Joel J. Orosz Fellowship in Philanthropy Johnson Center for Philanthropy, Grand Valley State University

Research

Graduate Research Assistant

Michigan State University, School of Social Work

- Dr. Joanne Smith-Darden (2021 – 2022)
- Dr. Joanne Riebschleger (2019 – 2021)

SPARK Research for Social Change Lab, Co-Director, 2021-2022

Michigan State University, School of Social Work

Grant Awards

2025	Principal Investigator Nyenhuis Faculty Development Grant, Hope College <i>COVID-19 Relief & Family Well-Being: Understanding Family Interactions with Economic Policies</i>	\$9,300
2024	Principal Investigator Dissertation Completion Fellowship, College of Social Science, Michigan State University <i>The Role of State-Level Paid Family Leave for Infant Maltreatment Prevention</i>	\$7,500
2023	Principal Investigator Youth Equity Project Seed Grant, College of Social Science, Michigan State University <i>The Role of State-Level Paid Family Leave for Infant Maltreatment Prevention</i>	\$1,500
2023	Principal Investigator Doctoral Award Honorable Mention, Grand Challenges for Social Work <i>Paid Family Leave and Maltreatment Prevention</i>	\$500

2020-2021	Co-Investigator Provost's Undergraduate Research Initiative, Michigan State University <i>Effectiveness of a Mental Health Literacy Website for Children of Parents with a Mental Illness.</i> PI: Joanne Riebschleger	\$4,000
2020	Co-Principal Investigator Small COVID-19 Grant Award, College of Social Science, Michigan State University <i>Resilience and Self-Determination: The Impact of COVID-19 on CSWE Social Work Education in Michigan.</i> Co-PI: Leonardo Kattari	\$3,000

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Note: * indicates student co-author

- Tanis, J.M.** & Boyke, H. (2025). Who benefits? Examining the moderating role of race in paid family leave's relationship with infant neglect. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 180, 108687.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2025.108687>
- Tanis, J.M.** & *Yurschak, R. (2025). Paid family leave and infant maltreatment risk: A scoping review of socioecological factors. *Families in Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10443894251345872>
- Tanis, J.M.** & Kattari, L. (2024). "The room where it happens": Doctoral students' journey to community-engaged research. *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping*, 30(3), 48–58. Retrieved from <https://reflections narratives of professional helping.org/index.php/Reflections/article/view/2042>
- Tanis, J.M.**, Klein, S.M., Boyke, H. (2024). State paid family leave and infant maltreatment. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 152. 106758. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.106758>
- Tanis, J.M.** (2023). Stepping into the wilderness: A field guide for new social workers. *Clinical Journal of Social Work*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10615-023-00893-z>
- Kattari, L., **Tanis, J. M.**, & Cho, H. (under review). Choosing between safety and education: Social work education amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Cavanaugh, D. L., Riebschleger, J. and **Tanis, J. M.** (2021). Mental health literacy websites for children of parents with a mental illness. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/13591045211005514>

Peer-Reviewed Presentations

- Tanis, J.M.** & Boyke, H. (2026, January). *Paid Family Leave and Infant Neglect: State-Level Trends and Racial Moderators from 2003-2022*. 30th Annual Conference of Society for Social Work and Research; Washington, DC.

Klein, S.M., **Tanis, J.M.**, Thibodeau, E., & Osborne, C. (2025, May). *Understanding the Effect of State Paid Family Leave Policy on Family Functioning* [Paper Symposium]. Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting. Minneapolis, MN.

Tanis, J.M., Klein, S.M., & Boyke, H. (2025, January). *State paid family leave: A tool for infant maltreatment prevention*. 29th Annual Conference of Society for Social Work and Research; Kansas City, MO.

Tanis, J.M. & Kattari, L. (2024, October). *We're the problem it's us: When change agents become anti-heroes*. Interactive Workshop for the Council on Social Work Education 2024 Annual Program Meeting; Kansas City, MO.

Tanis, J. & Klein, S. (2022, June). *Protecting America's children: Paid family leave's effect on infant abuse and neglect*. National Research Conference on Early Childhood; Virtual.

Tanis, J. & Klein, S. (2022, June). *Protecting America's children: Paid family leave's effect on infant abuse and neglect*. American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children Annual Colloquium; New Orleans, LA.

Riebschleger, J. & **Tanis, J.** (2021, November). *A nested mentoring research team involving BSW, MSW, and Doctoral Students*. Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting; Orlando, FL.

Tanis, J. & Kattari, L. (2021, February). *"I feel as if I'm having to choose between my safety and my education": Social work education in Michigan amid the new COVID-19 pandemic*. MSU School of Social Work Lunch and Learn Series, East Lansing, MI.

Sutherby, C., Nelson, A., & **Tanis, J.** (2020, October). *What I wish I had known about doctoral education that I know now – An open discussion*. MSU School of Social Work Lunch and Learn Series, East Lansing, MI.

Tanis, J., DeDecker, L., Hop, A., Johnson, D., Kurinsky, J., & Schoenek, C. (2017, June). *Ask the Experts Panel: Managing Stress*. Panel discussion presented at Grand Rapids Natural Health; Grand Rapids, MI.

Tanis, J., Morrow, R., Mutch, G., Reisterer, B., & Revere, K. (2017, October). *Be Here Now – What Does Self-Care in the Present Moment Look Like?* Panel discussion for Inspired Life GR; Grand Rapids, MI.

Public Scholarship and Media

Tanis, J. (2026, April 17). *The first amendment and clinical harm: Protecting client self-determination in social work practice*. The New Social Worker. <https://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/ethics-articles/first-amendment-clinical-harm-protecting-client-self-determination-social-work/>

Bowling, Erin. (2024, April 29). *MSU study finds direct correlation between child abuse and paid family leave*. WILX 10. <https://www.wilx.com/2024/04/29/msu-study-finds-direct-correlation-between-child-abuse-paid-family-leave/>

- Ward, K. (2024, April 25). *New MSU research finds paid family leave helps prevent child abuse*. MSUToday. <https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2024/04/new-msu-research-finds-paid-family-leave-helps-prevent-child-abuse>
- Tanis, J. & Klein, S. (2024, January 16). *The impact of paid family leave on child maltreatment*. Interview by John Kelly for *The Imprint Weekly* [Audio podcast episode]. The Imprint Youth & Family News. <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1376827/episodes/16291758>
- Riebschleger, J. & Tanis, J. (2020, December). Kids want to learn more about mental illness and how to cope with parents who live with it. *The Conversation*. <https://doi.org/10.64628/AAI.kveetgyap>

Teaching

2022 – Present Hope College, Department of Sociology and Social Work

Courses taught:

- SWK 241: Introduction to Social Welfare
- SWK 242: Child Welfare
- SWK 232: Social Work and Family
- SWK 322: Social Policy

2021 – 2022 Grand Valley State University, School of Social Work

Courses taught:

- SW 319: Social Welfare Policy and Services
- SW 322: Responding to Chronic Illness

Mentoring

Undergraduate Summer Research Faculty Mentor

2025	Aryana Elias	Sociology and Social Work Department, Hope College
Co-Coordinator , Leadership Development Fellowship, The Graduate School, Michigan State University		
2021-2022	Chelsie Boodoo	Biosystems & Agricultural Engineering
2021-2022	Sarah Galvin	Educational Psychology & Education Technology
2021-2022	Amit Sharma	Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education
2021-2022	Elizabeth Stebbins	Department of Fisheries & Wildlife
2021-2022	Brian Taylor	Wind Conducting

MSW Research Mentor

2021-2022	Oscar Cortez	School of Social Work, Michigan State University
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Undergraduate Research Mentor

2019-2021	Erin Kramer	School of Social Work, Michigan State University
2020-2022	Carson Biederman	School of Social Work, Michigan State University

Professional Service

Service to the College

2025 – Present	Faculty Member , AI Task Force, Hope College
2025 – Present	Faculty Member , Greek Judicial Board, Hope College
2024 – Present	Faculty Co-Advisor , Sociology and Social Work Organization, Hope College
2022 – 2025	Faculty Advisor , Yoga Club, Hope College
2021 – 2022	Search Committee Member , School of Social Work, Michigan State University

Service to the Profession

2025 – Present **Reviewer**, Children and Youth Services Review
2024 – Present **Reviewer**, National Research Conference on Early Childhood
2023 – Present **Reviewer**, Families in Society
2023 – Present **Reviewer**, Clinical Social Work Journal
2020 – 2024 **Reviewer**, Perspectives on Social Work

Service to the Community

2025 – Present Family Favorites Work Group, Grand Rapids Southeast Promise Neighborhood
2025 – Present Member-at-Large, School Board, Grand Rapids Child Discover Center
2024 – 2025 New Beacons of Hope Leadership Development Program, MomRising
2023 – Present Students Demand Action Liaison, Moms Demand Action
2023 – Present Racial Justice Peer Coach, Moms Demand Action
2021 – 2022 Healthy Girls, Women & Mothers/Mental, Emotional & Behavioral Well-Being Action Committee
Perinatal and Infant Health Section, MI Department of Health and Human Services
2016 – 2019 Diversity Development Team; Bethany Christian Services, Grand Rapids, MI
2017 – 2018 Hand2Hand Coordinator; Cornerstone Church, Grand Rapids, MI
2016 – 2019 Pressley Ridge Treatment Parent Curriculum Trainer; Bethany Christian Services; Grand Rapids, MI
2016 – 2017 Advancement Committee Member; HQ-GR, Grand Rapids, MI
2014 – 2019 Community Mandated Reporter Trainer; Family Futures, Grand Rapids, MI
2014 – 2016 Vice President; MI Professional Society on the Abuse of Children
2012 – 2015 Chapter Advisory Board Member; Kappa Delta Sorority (Alpha Alpha Chapter) Michigan State University

Professional Memberships

Council on Social Work Education
National Association of Social Workers
Society for Social Work Research
Society for Research in Child Development

Special Projects

Mental Health Info for Teens (2020). <http://www.mhiteens.org> (Tanis, J.)
Our State of Generosity (2017). www.ourstateofgenerosity.org (Tanis, J.)

Specialized Certifications

Trauma-Informed Yoga Training, Street Yoga, 2017
200 Hour Yoga Teacher, Yoga Alliance, 2017
Mandated Reporter Training Facilitator, State of Michigan, 2014
Forensic Interview of Children Training, Child Abuse Training Services Program, 2014
Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Training, Medical University of South Carolina, 2014
Child Death Scene Investigation Training, Michigan Public Health Institute, 2013

Social Work Practice Experience

Adoption Specialist, *Bethany Christian Services; Grand Rapids, MI (2015 – 2019)*

Seek to find permanency for children in Michigan's foster care system through adoption. Conduct quality child and family assessments, case management services, and adoptive placement supervision. Act in compliance with agency guidelines, state licensing regulations, and/or grant requirements. Advocate for the best interest of the child in an effort to reach permanency through home visits, written reports, and court testimony.

Triage Coordinator, *Center for Child Protection; Grand Rapids, MI (2013 - 2015)*

Participate on an interdisciplinary team of physicians, nurses, and social workers to provide medical evaluations for children at-risk of abuse and/or neglect. Conducted medical history interviews and assessments with patients ages 3-17. Triaged referral phone calls from child protective services, law enforcement, and medical providers from 62 counties. Gather, synthesize, and present case information to the physicians for medical case reviews.

Dr. Joel J. Orosz Fellow, *Johnson Center for Philanthropy; Grand Rapids, MI (2012 – 2014)*

Member of a research team for a comprehensive project, *Our State of Generosity*, responsible for capturing, preserving, and disseminating the stories, achievements, and lessons of Michigan's philanthropic history. Facilitated project collaboration between the Johnson Center for Philanthropy, the Council of Michigan Foundations, the Michigan Nonprofit Association, and the Michigan Community Service Commission. Key project elements included preserving and organizing data, chronicling oral histories, researching and writing person profiles, and editing and fact-checking project manuscripts.

Clinical Liaison, *Youth Villages; Memphis, TN (2010 – 2011)*

Served as the liaison between direct-care providers and clinicians in a residential treatment unit. Provided case management for a minimum of 12 youth at a time, ages 14-17. Facilitated bi-weekly group therapy sessions for adolescent consumers. Collaborated with clinicians to develop trauma-informed treatment plans for adolescent consumers. Conducted intake and discharge assessments. Developed and implemented a new campus-wide audit process to ensure accurate documentation for 88 residents.

Transitional Living Specialist, *Youth Villages; Memphis, TN (2010)*

Provided therapeutic transitional living services for youth aging out of the foster care system. Provided case management for a minimum of nine clients at a time, ages 17-22. Completed comprehensive bio-psychosocial assessments to determine and prioritize client needs. Developed monthly treatment plans addressing goals of education, vocation, health care, mental health, and housing. Collaborated with the Department of Children's Services, foster care, and other systems involved in each young adult's life. Facilitated the linkage and referral to community-based services.

Residential Teacher/Counselor, *Youth Villages; Memphis, TN (2009-2010)*

Provided direct supervision for 16 residents (ages 14-17) with severe emotional and behavioral needs. Participated in bi-weekly meetings with an interdisciplinary treatment team to discuss the youth's treatment plans. Engaged with youth to promote growth and healing through the use of crisis de-escalation, coping skills, and other therapeutic interventions. Conducted daily documentation.